BYRON

ILLUSTRATED

George H. Humbert.

The Castle of Chillon. — Page 164.

THE POETICAL WORKS

OF

LORD BYRON

WITH

MEMOIR AND EXPLANATORY NOTES

Illustrated by

GARRETT, HASSAM, SCHELL, WAUD

AND OTHERS

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THE LIFE OF LORD BYRON.

BY ALEXANDER LEIGHTON.

GEORGE GORDON LORD BYRON was descended of a very ancient and illustrious family. The celebrated Commodore Byron, an account of whose shipwrecks once delighted so much the readers of adventures, was his grandfather. His father was Captain Byron, an extravagant and licentious man, who, after squandering his own fortune, married Miss Gordon of Gight, in Aberdeenshire, and got with her not only the property to which she was heiress, but a considerable sum of money, all of which he soon spent. The poet was born in London on the 22d of January, 1788, two years after which his mother, in consequence of the death of her husband, left England, and took up her residence at Aberdeen—a place suited to her now scanty resources, which were not supplemented by her husband's uncle, the then Lord Byron, a retired and gloomy man, of an ungenerous spirit.

For eight years the poet resided with his mother; and here began that treatment which, acting on a generous but irritable mind, laid the foundation of a character marked by so many virtues, and so many offences against good taste and public morals. His mother, whose life had been soured by the extravagant conduct of her husband, acted towards the boy—who was not only of a weak bodily habit, but deformed in one, if not both, of his feet—as if she had predetermined to make his moral nature of that anomalous character it afterwards exhibited, the means she employed being indulgence, not always deserved, and severity, as seldom merited. These cherished his natural hastiness of temper, as well as pampered his proud wilfulness, until the one hastened to irascibility, and the other to a selfish defiance of every one about him. All the good tendencies of his fine nature were thus weakened and misdirected, and all the bad ones were aggravated and deepened. To this was added a constant change of teachers, as well as methods of teaching, without reference to the abilities or inclinations of the boy, and the consequence resulted in an almost absolute indifference to all studies.

We have some glimpses of his boyhood while at Aberdeen. He was never forward in his school work, and was always far down in the class at the day-school to which he had been sent; but while thus indifferent to the exercises of the head, he was even now, in his very boyhood, showing how strong was the emotional element in his nature. A deep impression was made upon his heart when no more than eight years of age by a young girl of the name of Mary Duff. So genuine had been this early love, that even in 1813, when he was twenty-five years of age, he confesses that the news of Mary Duff's marriage was like "a thunderstroke,—it nearly choked me, to the horror of my mother, and the astonishment and incredulity of almost everybody." About the same time, on recovering from scarlet fever, he was sent for fresh air to a farmhouse near Ballater. The house has become famous; and the bed where the poet lay is still pointed out as Byron's bed. It was here probably that he was impressed with the grandeur of Highland scenery; for a short walk sufficed to bring him to dark Lochnagar, that mountain which inspired almost the earliest, certainly the best, of the early efforts of his muse. It is even said, in praise of the overlaid aspirations of his better nature, that the peace and innocence that reigned among these grand displays of nature haunted him amidst the fevered excitement of a conventional, if not dissipated life. In the "Island," a poem written not long before his death, he let slip some thoughts which have reference to these early worshippings of his better nature:

> "But 'twas not all long ages' lore, nor all
> *Their* nature held me in their thrilling thrall;
> The infant rapture still survived the boy,
> And Lochnagar with Ida look'd o'er Troy."

His mother's regular system of spoiling continued till his eleventh year, when the death of his granduncle made him the possessor of a noble title and a large property; but it did not end here. Unfortunately, the mother was left by the guardians to take her own way with the now young lord; and as if his good fortune had inflamed her desire to perfect the work she had so early begun, she had recourse to new methods,—one of which consisted in subjecting him to fruitless operations for the purpose, no doubt well designed, of curing his lameness, but the effect of which was only to sink deeper into his mind the bitter regret of his infirmity, and to increase that misanthropy which had been gradually rising out of asperity. It has been even said, we hope untruly, that his mother was in the habit of taunting him with this unfortunate deformity,—conduct so cruel and gratuitous, as to require a better proof than it has yet received.

On his removal to an excellent private school at Dulwich, under Dr. Glennie, it was very soon seen what benefit resulted from a cessation of the mother's authority, for here he manifested much im-

provement both in temper and industry; and had it not been for the still constant interferences from home, the world might have been saved the pain of seeing genius clouded by moral infirmities. Even here, long visits to home broke in upon his studies, and sent him back to begin anew a course of amendment.

On his next removal, to Harrow, new hopes were inspired; and though he proved himself often rebellious, and a not very careful student, especially of the classics, he went through a great deal of miscellaneous reading. Then, on all hands, he was admired for his generosity, and courted for his spirit. It was in 1803, while spending the vacation at Nottingham, near Newstead, and before he had reached his eighteenth year, that he met a young lady, Miss Chaworth, the heiress of Annesley, an extensive estate in the neighborhood of his patrimonial mansion. His senior by two years, and gifted with both beauty and intelligence, she was calculated to have redeemed him from his errors without abating the enthusiasm of his genius; but the young lady, besides being engaged, saw nothing in him to attract her, or even stir her sympathy. Instead of regarding him as one worthy of being a candidate for her hand, she looked upon him as a mere schoolboy. Byron was not slow to see this, and his eyes were still more effectually opened when it was reported to him that she had used the expression, "Do you think I would care anything for that lame boy?" Yet all this did not cure his love—if it did not, according to the common rule, increase it. Though there is said to have been some romance in this attachment, founded on the fact of a near relative of the young lady having been killed by the prior Lord Byron in a duel, it seems to be the general opinion that his affection was not only not a mere flitting feeling, but perhaps more generous and ardent than any love he ever entertained afterwards; but it seems to have been Byron's fate to have had all outward powers and agencies ever ready to intercept his return to moderation and prudence. Of this lady he says:

> "There was but one beloved face on earth,
> And that was shining on him; he had look'd
> Upon it till it could not pass away;
> He had no breath, no being, but in hers:
> She was his voice; he did not speak to her,
> But trembled on her words: she was his sight,
> For his eye followed hers, and saw with hers,
> Which color'd all his objects:—he had ceased
> To live within himself; she was his life."

In another part of the same poem he alludes to her melancholy fate—derangement:

> "The Lady of his love:—Oh, she was changed,
> As by the sickness of the soul; her mind
> Had wander'd from its dwelling, and her eyes
> They had not their own lustre, but the look
> Which is not of the earth; she was become
> The queen of a fantastic realm."

The latter disappointment, or this love all on one side, tended still further to confirm the early tendency to misanthropy which had its beginnings in his deformity and his mother's treatment. Yet so flexible is human nature—drawing strength from weakness—that his genius, as Goethe says, was pain. Even he himself admits that the very misfortune he so often regretted was the source of the power which he wielded, though probably it is more true that it only affected the direction of that power. In "The Deformed Transformed" he says:

> "Deformity is daring.
> It is its essence to o'ertake mankind
> By heart and soul, and make itself the equal—
> Ay, the superior of the rest. There is
> A spur in its halt movements, to become
> All that the others cannot, in such things
> As still are free to both, to compensate
> For stepdame Nature's avarice at first."

Entered at Trinity College, Cambridge, in the autumn of 1805, he resided there for two years. It is admitted that, when the humor seized him, he read avariciously, and thus acquired a great amount of varied and stray knowledge; but in the midst of these acquisitions, which he sometimes poured forth, changed by the alchemy of his rising genius, so as to produce the impression that he was a young man of no ordinary promise, he was eccentric, profuse, and, in school language, idle. Signally a fast young man, he differed from his associates only in being often clouded in melancholy, and probably struggling with aspirations. He never loved either Cambridge or its learning, while all the self-will of his nature was arrayed against the laws and restrictions of the university, as well as those who administered them. The ecclesiastical authority was, in particular, distasteful to him, for already he was seized with that spirit of scepticism which is ever allied to misanthropic tendencies, and this, again, brought down upon him the significant suspicion of his teachers. The dissociation from studies was in him another name for an utter resignation of both mind and body to his impulses. The fervency of his nature, not yet gratified by poetry, got relief in swimming and boxing; but here again his evil fate was in the way, for as his deformity had stood between him and his love, so now it militated against his success in competition, not that he was not both energetic and expert, but that he felt he might have been triumphant had he been more auspiciously formed. And it was not this drawback alone that he had to lament; which, if he had treated it as Scott did his similar infirmity, might have been borne with resignation and without loss, but he began at this time to show tokens of obesity, another evil which, as an infliction unmerited, he resented while he struggled against.

In the midst of all this he rushed into poetry, which, however, was only a continuation of a tendency already exhibited, for while at Dr. Glennie's at Dulwich he had struck off pieces to his cousin, Miss

Margaret Parker. This he considered to have been his first effort; but his nurse, Mary Gray, who was not likely to have forgotten so important an exploit in the strange youth, represents him as having discharged a satire at an old lady who had angered him in some way. His efforts at Cambridge, however, had all the fire and rashness of a first burst. The pieces circulated from hand to hand before any were printed; but at length a small part of them were put to press. The first copy was presented to the Rev. John Becher, Southwell, whom he considered his friend, as no doubt he was; and probably that gentleman gave evidence of his sincerity in expostulating with him on the unwarranted "luxuriousness of coloring" in one specimen, whereupon the impatient youth instantly ordered the whole stock to be burned. Only two copies remained—Mr. Becher's own, and one that found the way to Edinburgh. A reduced edition appeared in 1807.

Now came the turning-point of his life, in the publication of "The Hours of Idleness;" for though the volume itself presented a collection, from the very best of which, such as the beautiful stanzas to "Lochnagar," one would scarcely have ventured to presage the powers reserved for him to exhibit, it was destined to be noticed in the great literary organ of the day, the *Edinburgh Review*, and to be handled in a manner to rouse the energies of the author. It has been often said that the reviewer had a grudge to satisfy, which was apparent, not only in the harsh treatment of so young an aspirant, but in the very circumstance of taking up so apparently a trifle; and probably, notwithstanding disclamations, there was at least political feeling or democratic ill-nature. At any rate, nothing more auspicious could have occurred to Byron, who, the reverse of John Keats, was as unlikely "to die of an article" as he was likely to make the reviewer die of a satire. Anger collected the scattered beginnings of his strength to a centre where it could be felt. Having studied the satirical poets as models, and collected every available bit of gossip floating at the time, he, in 1809, poured forth his wrath, all the warmer for the nursing he had given it, in his "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers." Pointed in its abusive personalities, and contemptuous, without any discrimination, of all the literary characters of the day, this poem exhibited powers which only wanted maturation to achieve very great things, though not so great as he achieved. Yet it is certain that Byron was subsequently ashamed of this satire, not that it was satirical, nor that it was destitute of merit, but rather that the men against whom it was chiefly directed, showed they had the art of heaping coals of fire on his head. On a copy which he perused long after, he wrote the following words:—"The binding of this volume is considerably too valuable for its contents. Nothing but the consideration of its being the property of another prevents me from consigning this miserable record of misplaced anger and indiscriminate acrimony to the flames." Yet he was at

the time engaged in performing an office of the same kind on human nature in general. The man was probably not changed, except that his love of singularity was increased. It is said that when he read the review he drank three bottles of claret at dinner—an act probably genuine enough in sincerity, but when he afterwards regretted his revenge, he could ridicule very sacred conventionalities among mankind. Even his own good fortune did not escape his satire, as when, on coming of age, he celebrated the occasion, and some say the anniversary, by dining on eggs and bacon and a bottle of ale, adding, long afterwards, to the reminiscence, "but as neither of them agrees with me, I never use them but on great jubilees, once in four or five years or so."

Such things, and many other eccentricities subsequently recorded—among the earliest of which was his epitaph on the dog buried at Newstead, wherein he gives the dog a soul and a far higher character than man, the common object of his revilings—all indicate the prevailing error of his mind, pride showing itself in singularity. We have used the word misanthropy, but really, as respects Byron, it is altogether misapplied. No man with so susceptible a heart for friendship, and such a relish for the good things of life—nay, a generosity of soul where his affections pointed out the object, could be said to be a genuine misanthrope. It was altogether with him a stage character. In that garb he had conciliated the people till he became an idol, and falsely supposed, that while his idolaters admired him, they also pitied him for the misfortune of being singular and gloomy. Not but that his soul spurned pity in the common sense, only it was a homage to his fate, and he gloried in being under the special dominion of a power which, like the Titans, he at the same time battled against.

There was another reason why Byron persisted in appearing in an aspect not expressing his true nature. His friends blindly took the young lord for what, in his poetry and juvenile escapades, he declared himself to be. They accordingly began early to stand aloof from him. Even Lord Carlisle, his guardian, fell into this error; nor can we have better evidence of this mistake than the fact, that when Lord Byron took his seat in the House of Lords in 1809, there was no one to introduce him, so there was induced an action and a reaction, all the consequents of a false move, and yet increasing on and on to the time of his death. But perhaps the best evidence we can have of the absolute domination of his love of singularity lies in the fact, that, though he often regretted his imprudences, his regret had always the acerbity of a retaliation against the punishment inflicted by those who suffered from the act regretted.

It was, accordingly, under a feeling of something approaching to disgust, that he resolved upon leaving England, on a two years' absence, with Mr. Hobhouse, subsequently Lord Broughton. It was in July, 1809, that he left Falmouth on this, as it turned out, poetical

pilgrimage, in the course of which he visited the Peninsula, extended his travels to Greece and Turkey, and, with his genius now inflamed by romantic objects, composed in great part the first and second parts of "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage." It may be interesting to trace these wanderings, destined to become, by the publication of the poem in 1812, so famous.

After touching at Lisbon, Cadiz, and Gibraltar and Malta, he arrived at Prevesa in Albania, from which he proceeded on a tour through the provinces of Turkey, arriving at Athens. Here he spent a considerable time examining the monuments of ancient philosophy and freedom, which were afterwards to inspire his muse in her most amiable fit. He lived with the English Vice-Consul, and there met one of his daughters, the celebrated Theresa Macri, so well known as "the Maid of Athens,"—a lady of great beauty, who was afterwards married to Mr. Black, a gentleman only known for his possession of so famous a woman, and of great strength of body. Lord Byron subsequently went to Constantinople, where he accomplished the feat of swimming across the Hellespont, professedly in imitation of Leander in his visit to Hero. Of this feat he might very well be proud, as the distance, though direct not more than a mile, is fully three if you count the effect of the currents; and though he did not come back again, it requires to be remembered that he swam for ambition, not for love of a beautiful woman. After all, the task was nothing to what he accomplished afterwards; for, on this occasion, he was only an hour and ten minutes in the water, whereas, in the Grand Canal of Venice, he was four hours and twenty minutes. He returned to Athens in the month of July, and took some excursions in the Morea, his head-quarters being the monument of Lysicrates, or Lantern of Diogenes,—a building somewhat resembling Dugald Stewart's monument on the Calton Hill of Edinburgh. Here he wrote his satire upon London life, and collected notes for his "Childe Harold."

In this journey the two years expired. In the meantime, his mother, living at Newstead, was under a presentiment that she would never see him again, although the state of her health did not indicate a near dissolution. Yet so it turned out in a manner favorably to mystery, and yet not untrue to her character. It would appear that the very preparations she made for his return hastened the fulfilment of her augury; for the sight of some upholsterers' bills threw her into such a frenzy of passion, that she expired just as Byron was posting to Newstead. He was only in time to bury her. On the occasion of the funeral, a circumstance occurred which can hardly be accounted for, even by a confirmed love of eccentricity, not less, indeed, than by insanity. He did not accompany the remains of his mother to the vault, but stood at the entrance-door of the mansion, looking with unmeaning eyes at the procession; and no sooner had it disappeared, than, putting on a pair of boxing-gloves, he began a

sparring match with a boy-servant, selected on the instant as his antagonist. It is said that if he had not known that this would be recorded, he never would have performed it. Perhaps this may be true, and yet there is a kind of philosophy which would find another cause, if not an excuse. Obedience to grief is natural, but there is a rebellion against what may be called the cruelty of Fate, which is only unnatural, because seldom witnessed. It is quite certain that he lamented bitterly the loss of his parent; for, a few nights before, he was found sitting in the dark by her corpse, and when expostulated with, answered, "O Mrs. By., I had but one friend in the world, and she is gone." And about a month afterwards, he is found writing to Mr. Murray: "Your letter gives me credit for more acute feelings than I possess; for though I feel tolerably miserable, yet I am at the same time subject to a kind of hysterical merriment, or rather laughter without merriment, which I can neither account for nor conquer." This is an explanation of what appears to be an anomaly, which, in place of being dishonorable to the feelings, however antagonistic to worldly prudence and decorum, may be construed as a weakness overshadowing strength, and producing an abnormal condition of the heart, to which we are witnesses in the case of excitable women every day.

Byron made his first speech in Parliament on 27th February, 1812, on the occasion of the Nottingham Frame-breaking Bill; and two days thereafter appeared the two first cantos of "Childe Harold." It was on the success attending this work that he used the well-known words, "I awoke one morning and found myself famous." He was now twenty-four, and at this early age became the most popular poet that perhaps England ever saw,—and thus like our Burns as regards Scotland. Byron had a style peculiarly his own, and so unlike that of the reigning favorites, Wordsworth and Coleridge, that the people were delighted with a medium of reaching their hearts free from the obscure philosophy of the one, and the dreamy metaphysics of the other. He seemed to liberate them from a bondage as their sympathies found play in his clear language, rapid turns, and penetrating flashes. Nor less did his poetry resemble Scott's metrical romances, whose homeliness, if not often heaviness, contrasted unfavorably with the new poet's stirring flow of affections, which, if more conventional, were fresher and more in accordance with modern habits of both thinking and feeling. Even in his tales which came afterwards, Byron charmed away the admirers of his northern rival, whose popularity waned visibly every day.

In rapid succession now came the beautiful fragment "The Giaour," the less regular "Bride of Abydos," "The Corsair," and its sequel "Lara." During all this period, when his fame culminated, he is represented as being little better than mad; but it was the madness of one who had striven for superiority as a blessing that was to cure his spirit of many ills, and found that his appetite for

fame sickened upon what it fed. This is less or more the effect of all ambition; but in Byron it took a strange aspect. On 6th December, 1813, appears this entry in his Journal:—"This journal is a relief. When I am tired—as I generally am—out comes this, and down goes everything. But I can't read it over; and God knows what contradictions it may contain. If I am severe with myself, (but I fear one lies more near to one's self than to any one else,) every page should confute, refute, and utterly abjure its predecessor." In a paroxysm, of which the cause is not known, he wrote to his publisher, with an order that all his writings should be immediately destroyed; but on a representation from Mr. Murray, he agreed, like a child, to moderate counsel. In 1816, the first and most characteristic portion of Byron's works terminated with "The Siege of Corinth" and "Parisina."

While thus building up his poetical fame, his domestic history underwent a change. His friends, really anxious for a return on the part of this extraordinary man to those pleasures which can only be found within the precincts of morality and the domestic *lares*, heard with much satisfaction that he had paid his addresses to the daughter of Sir Ralph Milbanke, and with still more, that he had been accepted. Things looked propitious: even the unseen powers seemed to be pleased, if we are to believe that his mother's marriage-ring, which had been lost, was dug up by the gardener at Newstead on the very day Miss Milbanke's acceptance reached the poet. In 1815, they were married. In the same year, Lady Byron bore him a daughter, the Ada so often alluded to by him, and who afterwards married Lord Lovelace. But the marriage proved unhappy; and in the beginning of 1816, she quitted her husband's house never to return. During the whole of this time, Newstead must have presented an extraordinary scene in many respects. The quarrels have not transpired; but the pecuniary embarrassments into which Byron had precipitated himself were too open to be hidden. The house was nine times in the possession of bailiffs; and although Lady Byron had not left, it is certain that Byron himself would have been necessitated again to leave England. His pride was so far humbled, too, that he consented to receive payment for his writings—a kind of remuneration which he had heretofore considered a degradation.

The secret of this difference has long been one of those domestic mysteries calculated to engage the attention of a curious public. It is certain that many attempts were made by friends at reconciliation; but where the lady was under the impression that her husband was insane, there could be no hope of such a result. In the midst of the confused negotiations it came out that her ladyship condescended on no fewer than sixteen evidences of insanity, but the precise character of these has never come to the public ear, so that the curiosity which ought to have abated with a mere knowledge of the imputation, rather increased. Of course, Lord Byron was no more insane than

he ever had been. The world is full of such maniacs, who are often, by kind treatment, brought to become passable, even very loving, husbands. Byron had no fault to find with her, and was ready to embrace the first opportunity of trying to build up again a household peace; but even after the friends of both pronounced for his sanity, the lady took another position still more hopeless—that if he were sane, he was still more objectionable, in so far that his disrespect towards her must have resulted from intention. The truth would appear to be, that she had really never loved him with that affection which is so great a conciliator, smoothing down so many of the asperities of married life, and even changing faults into virtues. The one expression alone of his Lordship proves that he was not a marital impossibility,—"I never had, nor can have, any reproach to make to her while with me. Where there is blame, it belongs to myself; and if I cannot redeem it, I must bear it." The man who wrote this might have been won.

But the lady's part was, of course, taken by the public. An outcry was raised against Byron, who, soon after, left England, never to set foot in it again. His first residence was in the vicinity of Geneva, where the sublime scenery of Switzerland and the sympathies of Shelley contributed to raise his poetic enthusiasm into higher and purer vigor than it had yet attained. The "Prisoner of Chillon" was written here, and also the third canto of "Childe Harold;" but, beyond all, the influence of the surrounding scenery gave birth to "Manfred," a poem deriving a grandeur from physical *locale* and supernatural imagery which renders it nearly unique in our language. But in the midst of this poetical labor, and it is feared much dissipation, he was not a happy man. There is a melancholy passage in his "Journal" which has been often quoted. "In all this, recollections of bitterness, and more especially of recent and more home desolation which must accompany me through life, have preyed upon me here, and neither the music of the shepherd, nor the crashing of the avalanche, nor the torrent, the mountain, the glacier, the forest, nor the cloud, have for one moment lightened the weight upon my heart, nor enabled me to lose my own wretched identity in the majesty and the power and the glory around, above, and beneath me." It is questionable how far this melancholy was not due to a condition of the body induced by absurd diet. The horror of obesity still haunted him, and the means he took to diminish it are scarcely credible. "A thin slice of bread," says Moore, "with tea at breakfast, a light vegetable dinner, with a bottle or two of seltzer water, tinged with *vin de grave*, and in the evening a cup of green tea, without milk or sugar, formed the whole of his sustenance. The pangs of hunger he appeased by privately chewing tobacco and smoking cigars." In the end of 1816 he took up his residence in Venice, where he remained for three years, sometimes betaking himself to Rome, and collecting materials for the fourth canto of his

great poem. His residence in Venice was shaded by habits which are said to have reached a low and gross debauchery; nor was his connection, something more lasting than his other loves, with the Countess Guiccioli, though patronized by the husband and brother, any improvement, at least to English feelings. In 1820 he followed the Countess and her family to Ravenna, where, through them, he got engaged in political plots, the consequence of which was the banishment of his Italian friends from the Papal States. Pisa then became the abode of the party, where Byron received Mr. and Mrs. Shelley, and afterwards Mr. Leigh Hunt, and where they attempted the unsuccessful periodical, the *Liberal*.

At this stage of his life there occurs a touching incident. It happened that a young lady in Hastings made an entry in her diary, containing a solemn prayer for one very clearly pointed out as Lord Byron. She afterwards married a Mr. Sheppard, in Dorsetshire, and died in 1819. Two years afterwards, that gentleman, who had seen the entry, wrote to Lord Byron with a pious communication. Byron returned a prompt answer, allowing the advantage believers have over unbelievers, and saying that his scepticism was a necessity of his nature, yet almost hoping that he would be like Maupertius and Henry Kirke White, who began in infidelity and ended with a firm belief. It is to be feared that this hope was never realized.

While in Italy, Byron's poetical vein flowed freely. In addition to "Manfred" and the last canto of "Childe Harold," and several works rather poor, he produced "Mazeppa," "The Lament of Tasso," and his dramas, which, with the exception of "Cain," showed signs of moral improvement, though rather a falling off of poetical vigor. Though possessed of no great versatility, he had a vein for a grotesque humor, something of the Italian cast, approaching the ludicrous, yet admitting freely of exquisite descriptions. His first attempt in this direction was "Beppo," with its ethical looseness, pervading, like a crawling serpent among flowers, very noble poetry. The same remarks apply to "Don Juan." As connected with this phase of his character, we may notice that he had always exhibited a tendency to practical joking. Witness the present of a Bible he made to Mr. Murray, and of which that gentleman was so proud—showing it to his friends—until he discovered that Byron had put his pen through the word "*robber*," in the sentence, "Now Barabbas was a robber," and replaced it by "*publisher*." All this is very alien from a character of sullen misanthropy. Timon never jokes!

Byron left Pisa, in 1822, in consequence of a quarrel with some official, and also because the Guiccioli were ordered to quit the territories of Tuscany. He rejoined them in Genoa. In the meantime Shelley had been drowned, and soon after a field of activity was opened to him of a new kind. The London Committee of Philhellenes requested him to take part in the emancipation of Greece, and he

enthusiastically accepted the invitation. Sailing from Genoa in 1823, he arrived soon after at Cephalonia, where he began his patriotic exertions. In January, 1824, he landed at Missolonghi. He was now laboring under illness, which he had aggravated by bathing in the sea during his prior voyage. The great object of his expedition was fraught with disappointment to one who had sung of Greece as Greece once was. His health was further injured by imprudent exposure to cold in an unhealthy climate, and by many anxieties which he never expressed. He perhaps treated himself unwisely; having a great antipathy to obesity, he was always endeavoring to reduce it. In Greece he lived upon dry bread, vegetables, and cheese; and to notice the effect of his dietetics, he used to measure his wrist and waist every morning, taking medicine if he found an increase. On the 9th of April he got wet through, and fever and rheumatic pains came on. On the 18th he got up and attempted to read, but shortly became faint and returned to bed. He died of this fever, with, it is supposed, its accompanying inflammation of the heart, on the following day. It is said that a thunder-storm broke over the town at the moment of his decease—a clear sign to the Greeks that the prodigies of their old country are not yet ended. His remains were taken to England, and interred in the family vault in the church of Hucknall.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
LIFE OF LORD BYRON,	v
THE CORSAIR:	
Canto I.,	1
Canto II.,	15
Canto III.,	27
LARA:	
Canto I.,	43
Canto II.,	56
THE GIAOUR,	70
THE BRIDE OF ABYDOS:	
Canto I.,	100
Canto II.,	110
THE SIEGE OF CORINTH,	127
PARISINA,	149
THE PRISONER OF CHILLON,	163
THE DREAM,	173
THE LAMENT OF TASSO,	178
MANFRED. A Dramatic Poem,	184
HEAVEN AND EARTH. A Mystery,	214
CAIN. A Mystery,	240
THE CURSE OF MINERVA,	284
MAZEPPA,	291
THE PROPHECY OF DANTE,	309
Canto I.,	311
Canto II.,	315
Canto III.,	317
Canto IV.,	321
FRANCESCA OF RIMINI. From the Inferno of Dante. Canto V.,	325
HEBREW MELODIES:	
She walks in beauty,	327
The harp the monarch minstrel swept,	327
If that high world,	328
The wild Gazelle,	328
Oh! weep for those,	329
On Jordan's banks,	329
Jephtha's Daughter,	329
Oh! snatch'd away in Beauty's bloom,	330

HEBREW MELODIES.—*Continued.* PAGE
My soul is dark, ... 330
I saw thee weep, ... 330
Thy days are done, ... 331
Song of Saul before his Last Battle, ... 331
Saul, ... 332
"All is vanity, saith the Preacher," 332
When coldness wraps this suffering clay, ... 333
Vision of Belshazzar, ... 333
Sun of the sleepless, ... 334
Were my bosom as false as thou deem'st it to be, . . . 335
Herod's Lament for Mariamne, ... 335
On the Day of the Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, . 335
By the rivers of Babylon we sat down and wept, . . . 336
The Destruction of Sennacherib, ... 336
A Spirit pass'd before me, ... 337
HOURS OF IDLENESS. Preface, ... 338
On the Death of a Young Lady, ... 341
To E——, ... 341
To D——, ... 342
Epitaph on a Friend, ... 342
A Fragment, ... 343
On leaving Newstead Abbey, ... 343
Lines, ... 344
Adrian's Address to his Soul when dying, ... 344
Translation from Catullus, ... 345
Translation of the Epitaph on Virgil and Tibullus, . 345
Imitation of Tibullus, ... 345
Translation from Catullus, ... 346
Imitated from Catullus, ... 346
Translation from Horace, ... 346
From Anacreon, ... 347
From Anacreon, ... 347
From the Prometheus Vinctus of Æschylus, ... 348
To Emma, ... 349
To M. S. G., ... 349
To Caroline, ... 350
To Caroline, ... 351
To Caroline, ... 352
Stanzas to a Lady, ... 352
The first Kiss of Love, ... 353
On a Change of Masters at a great Public School, . . 353
To the Duke of Dorset, ... 354
Fragment, ... 356
Granta. A Medley, ... 356
On a Distant View of the Village and School of Harrow-on-the-Hill, ... 359

HOURS OF IDLENESS.—*Continued.* PAGE

To M——. 359
To Woman, ... 360
To M. S. G., ... 361
To Mary, ... 361
To Lesbia, ... 362
Lines addressed to a Young Lady, ... 363
Love's last Adieu, ... 364
Damætas, ... 365
To Marion, ... 365
To a Lady, ... 366
Oscar of Alva, ... 367
The Episode of Nisus and Euryalus, ... 374
Translation from the Medea of Euripides, ... 382
Thoughts suggested by a College Examination, . . . 383
To a Beautiful Quaker, ... 384
The Cornelian, ... 386
An occasional Prologue, ... 386
On the Death of Mr. Fox, ... 387
The Tear, ... 388
Reply to some Verses, ... 389
To the sighing Strephon, ... 390
To Eliza, ... 391
Lachin y Gair, ... 391
To Romance, ... 392
Answer to some Elegant Verses, ... 394
Elegy on Newstead Abbey, ... 395
Childish Recollections, ... 398
Answer to a Beautiful Poem, ... 406
Lines addressed to the Rev. J. T. Becher, ... 407
The Death of Calmar and Orla, ... 408
To Edward Noel Long, Esq., ... 411
To a Lady, ... 413
I would I were a careless Child, ... 414
When I roved a young Highlander, ... 415
To George, Earl Delawarr, ... 416
To the Earl of Clare, ... 417
Lines written beneath an Elm in the Churchyard of Harrow, 419

ENGLISH BARDS AND SCOTCH REVIEWERS. A Satire, . 421
Postscript, ... 449

THE WALTZ. An apostrophic Hymn, ... 450

POEMS ON NAPOLEON:

Ode to Napoleon, ... 459
Ode from the French, ... 462
To Napoleon, ... 464
Napoleon's Farewell, ... 465
On the Star of the Legion of Honor, ... 466

POEMS TO THYRZA: PAGE
To Thyrza, ... 467
Away, away, ye notes of woe, ... 468
One struggle more, and I am free, ... 469
Euthanasia, ... 470
And thou art dead, as young as fair, ... 471
If sometimes in the haunts of men, ... 472
DOMESTIC PIECES:
Fare thee well, ... 474
A Sketch, ... 475
Stanzas to Augusta, ... 477
Stanzas to Augusta, ... 478
Epistle to Augusta, ... 479
Lines on hearing that Lady Byron was ill, ... 482
Well! thou art happy, ... 483
THE VISION OF JUDGMENT, ... 485
MISCELLANEOUS POEMS:
Maid of Athens, ere we part, ... 508
Farewell! if ever fondest prayer, ... 509
Bright be the place of thy soul, ... 509
Remind me not, remind me not, ... 509
There was a time, I need not name, ... 510
And wilt thou weep, when I am low? 511
On Parting, ... 511
Thou art not false, but thou art fickle, ... 512
Remember him, whom Passion's power, ... 512
Lines written beneath a Picture, ... 513
Stanzas for Music, ... 514
The Chain I gave, ... 514
Translation of a Romaic Song, ... 514
Translation of a Romaic Love Song, ... 515
From the Portuguese, ... 516
To Genevra. Sonnets I. and II., ... 517
To Lake Leman. Sonnet, ... 517
Darkness, ... 518
Churchill's Grave, ... 519
To a Youthful Friend, ... 520
Inscription on the Monument of a Newfoundland Dog, . 522
To Time, ... 522
Lines inscribed on a Cup formed from a Skull, . . . 523
Prometheus, ... 524
Lines written in the Travellers' Book at Orchomenus, . 525
Lines written in an Album, at Malta. 525
Written after Swimming from Sestos to Abydos, . . 525
Translation of a famous Greek War-Song, ... 526
The spell is broke, the charm is flown! 527
Stanzas written on passing the Ambracian Gulf, . . 527

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.—*Continued.* PAGE
To Florence, ... 528
Stanzas composed during a Thunder-storm, . . . 529
On being asked what was the "Origin of Love," . . 531
Impromptu, in Reply to a Friend, ... 531
To Samuel Rogers, Esq., ... 531
Condolatory Address to Sarah, Countess of Jersey, . . 531
Stanzas to a Lady on leaving England, ... 532
The Farewell, ... 534
When we two parted, ... 534
Lines to a Lady weeping, ... 535
Windsor Poetics, ... 535
Elegiac Stanzas on the Death of Sir Peter Parker, Bart., . 535
A Fragment, ... 536
Stanzas for Music, ... 537
Fill the goblet again, ... 538
Remember thee! remember thee! 538
On a Cornelian Heart which was broken, ... 539
Monody on the Death of the Right Hon. R. B. Sheridan, . 539
Address, spoken at the Opening of Drury-Lane Theatre, Saturday, October 10, 1812, ... 541
On revisiting Harrow, ... 543
The Adieu. Written under the impression that the author would soon die, ... 543
Farewell to the Muse, ... 545
To an Oak at Newstead, ... 546
Epistle to a Friend, in answer to some lines exhorting the author to be cheerful, and to "banish care," . . 547
Stanzas for Music, ... 548
Address intended to have been recited at the Caledonian Meeting, 1814, ... 549
To Belshazzar, ... 550
Stanzas for Music, ... 550
CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE:
Preface, ... 551
To Ianthe, ... 554
Canto I., ... 555
To Inez, ... 574
Canto II., ... 577
Canto III., ... 600
Canto IV., ... 626
EXTRACTS FROM DON JUAN:
The Lake Poets (from Dedication), ... 667
Portrait of Julia, ... 668
Juan's Love, ... 668
Sweet Things, ... 669
Squandered Youth, ... 670

EXTRACTS FROM DON JUAN.—*Continued.* PAGE

Storm and Shipwreck, ... 671
An Eastern Picture, ... 676
The Poet's Song—The Isles of Greece, ... 677
Twilight, ... 679
Death in Youth, ... 680
Haidée's Dream, ... 680
Moorish Picture, ... 681
Dante's Column, ... 682
Love, ... 682
Eastern Group, ... 683
A Posture, ... 684
Love and Glory, ... 684
Wars, ... 684
Wellington, ... 685
Pyrrhonism, ... 686
England, ... 687
Berkley, ... 687
Poetical Characters, ... 688
A Sot, ... 689
Money, ... 689
The Fortune, ... 690
Quixotism, ... 691
Norman Abbey, ... 692
The Suicide, ... 695
Motives, ... 695
Truth, ... 696
Vanity, ... 696
Adeline's Song—The Black Friar, ... 697

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Engraved by George T. Andrew.

	ARTIST.	PAGE.
THE CASTLE OF CHILLON.	F. B. SCHELL.	*Frontispiece.*
"'O'er the glad waters of the dark-blue sea.'"	F. CHILDE HASSAM.	3
"Up rose that Dervise — not in saintly garb, But like a warrior bounding on his barb."	A. R. WAUD.	18
"'Oh! — no more — yet now my more than brother!'"	H. PRUETT SHARE.	121
"'Bring forth the horse!' The horse was brought; In truth he was a noble steed."	A. R. WAUD.	299
JEPHTHA'S DAUGHTER.	H. RICHTER.	329
THE MAID OF ATHENS.	A. E. CHALON.	508

	ARTIST.	PAGE.
"Beneath these battlements, within those walls, Power dwelt amidst her passions."	H. C. SELOUS.	615
"I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs; A palace and a prison on each hand."	E. H. GARRETT.	623
JUAN'S LOVE.	H. RICHTER.	608

THE CORSAIR.

TO THOMAS MOORE, ESQ.

My dear Moore: I dedicate to you the last production with which I shall trespass on public patience, and your indulgence, for some years; and I own that I feel anxious to avail myself of this latest and only opportunity of adorning my pages with a name consecrated by unshaken public principle, and the most undoubted and various talents. While Ireland ranks you among the firmest of her patriots; while you stand alone the first of her bards in her estimation, and Britain repeats and ratifies the decree, permit one whose only regret, since our first acquaintance, has been the years he had lost before it commenced, to add the humble but sincere suffrage of friendship to the voice of more than one nation. It will at least prove to you that I have neither forgotten the gratification derived from your society, nor abandoned the prospect of its renewal, whenever your leisure or inclination allows you to atone to your friends for too long an absence. It is said among those friends, I trust truly, that you are engaged in the composition of a poem whose scene will be laid in the East; none can do those scenes so much justice. The wrongs of your own country, the magnificent and fiery spirit of her sons, the beauty and feeling of her daughters, may there be found; and Collins, when he denominated his Oriental his Irish Eclogues, was not aware how true, at least, was a part of his parallel. Your imagination will create a warmer sun, and less clouded sky; but wildness, tenderness, and originality are part of your national claim of Oriental descent, to which you have already thus far proved your title more clearly than the most zealous of your country's antiquarians.

May I add a few words on a subject on which all men are supposed to be fluent and none agreeable?—Self. I have written much, and published more than enough to demand a longer silence than I now meditate; but, for some years to come, it is my intention to tempt no further the award of "gods, men, nor columns." In the present composition I have attempted not the most difficult, but, perhaps, the best adapted measure to our language, the good old, and now neglected heroic couplet. The stanza of Spenser is perhaps too slow and dignified for narrative; though, I confess, it is the measure most after my own heart. Scott alone, of the present generation, has hitherto completely triumphed over the fatal facility of the octo-syllable verse; and this is not the least victory of his fertile and mighty genius. In blank verse, Milton, Thomson, and our dramatists, are the beacons that shine along the deep, but warn us from the rough and

barren rock on which they are kindled. The heroic couplet is not the most popular measure, certainly; but as I did not deviate into the other from a wish to flatter what is called public opinion, I shall quit it without further apology, and take my chance once more with that versification in which I have hitherto published nothing but compositions whose former circulation is part of my present, and will be of my future regret.

With regard to my story, and stories in general, I should have been glad to have rendered my personages more perfect and amiable, if possible, inasmuch as I have been sometimes criticised, and considered no less responsible for their deeds and qualities than if all had been personal. Be it so. If I have deviated into the gloomy vanity of "drawing from self," the pictures are probably like, since they are unfavorable; and if not, those who know me are undeceived, and those who do not, I have little interest in undeceiving. I have no particular desire that any but my acquaintance should think the author better than the beings of his imagining; but I cannot help a little surprise, and perhaps amusement, at some odd critical exceptions in the present instance, when I see several bards (far more deserving, I allow,) in very reputable plight, and quite exempted from all participation in the faults of those heroes, who, nevertheless, might be found with little more morality than "The Giaour," and perhaps—but no—I must admit Childe Harold to be a very repulsive personage; and as to his identity, those who like it must give him whatever *alias* they please.

If, however, it were worth while to remove the impression, it might be of some service to me, that the man who is alike the delight of his readers and his friends, the poet of all circles, and the idol of his own, permits me here and elsewhere to subscribe myself, most truly and affectionately, his obedient servant,

BYRON.

January 2, 1814.

"O'er the glad waters of the dark blue sea."
The Corsair, page 3.

THE CORSAIR.

CANTO THE FIRST.

"——— nessun maggior dolore,
Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
Nella miseria, ———."—DANTE.

I.

"O'ER the glad waters of the dark-blue sea,*
Our thoughts as boundless, and our souls as free,
Far as the breeze can bear, the billows foam,
Survey our empire, and behold our home!
These are our realms, no limits to their sway—
Our flag the sceptre all who meet obey.
Ours the wild life in tumult still to range
From toil to rest, and joy in every change.
Oh, who can tell? not thou, luxurious slave!
Whose soul would sicken o'er the heaving wave;
Not thou, vain lord of wantonness and ease;
Whom slumber soothes not—pleasure cannot please—
Oh, who can tell, save he whose heart hath tried,
And danced in triumph o'er the waters wide,
The exulting sense—the pulse's maddening play,
That thrills the wanderer of that trackless way?
That for itself can woo the approaching fight,
And turn what some deem danger to delight;
That seeks what cravens shun with more than zeal,
And where the feebler faint—can only feel—
Feel—to the rising bosom's inmost core,
Its hope awaken and its spirit soar?
No dread of death—if with us die our foes—
Save that it seems even duller than repose:
Come when it will—we snatch the life of life—
When lost—what recks it—by disease or strife?
Let him who crawls enamor'd of decay,
Cling to his couch, and sicken years away;
Heave his thick breath, and shake his palsied head;
Ours—the fresh turf, and not the feverish bed.
While gasp by gasp he falters forth his soul,
Ours with one pang—one bound—escapes control.
His corpse may boast its urn and narrow cave,
And they who loathed his life may gild his grave;

* The time in this poem may seem too short for the occurrences, but the whole of the Ægean isles are within a few hours' sail of the continent, and the reader must be kind enough to take the *wind* as I have often found it.

Ours are the tears, though few, sincerely shed,
When Ocean shrouds and sepulchres our dead.
For us, even banquets fond regret supply
In the red cup that crowns our memory;
And the brief epitaph in danger's day,
When those who win at length divide the prey,
And cry, Remembrance saddening o'er each brow,
How had the brave who fell exulted *now!*"

II.

Such were the notes that from the Pirate's isle,
Around the kindling watch-fire rang the while;
Such were the sounds that thrill'd the rocks along,
And unto ears as rugged seem'd a song!
In scatter'd groups upon the golden sand,
They game—carouse—converse—or whet the brand;
Select the arms—to each his blade assign,
And careless eye the blood that dims its shine;
Repair the boat, replace the helm or oar,
While others straggling muse along the shore;
For the wild bird the busy springes set,
Or spread beneath the sun the dripping net;
Gaze where some distant sail a speck supplies,
With all the thirsting eye of Enterprise;
Tell o'er the tales of many a night of toil,
And marvel where they next shall seize a spoil:
No matter where—their chief's allotment this;
Theirs, to believe no prey nor plan amiss.
But who that CHIEF? his name on every shore
Is famed and fear'd—they ask and know no more.
With these he mingles not but to command;
Few are his words, but keen his eye and hand.
Ne'er seasons he with mirth their jovial mess,
But they forgive his silence for success.
Ne'er for his lip the purpling cup they fill,
That goblet passes him untasted still—
And for his fare—the rudest of his crew
Would that, in turn, have pass'd untasted too;
Earth's coarsest bread, the garden's homeliest roots,
And scarce the summer luxury of fruits,
His short repast in humbleness supply
With all a hermit's board would scarce deny.
But while he shuns the grosser joys of sense,
His mind seems nourish'd by that abstinence.
"Steer to that shore!"—they sail. "Do this!"—'tis done!
"Now form and follow me!"—the spoil is won.
Thus prompt his accents and his actions still,
And all obey and few inquire his will;
To such, brief answer and contemptuous eye
Convey reproof, nor further deign reply.

III.

"A sail!—a sail!"—a promised prize to Hope!
Her nation—flag—how speaks the telescope?

No prize, alas!—but yet a welcome sail:
The blood-red signal glitters in the gale.
Yes—she is ours—a home-returning bark—
Blow fair, thou breeze!—she anchors ere the dark.
Already doubled is the cape—our bay
Receives that prow which proudly spurns the spray.
How gloriously her gallant course she goes!
Her white wings flying—never from her foes—
She walks the waters like a thing of life,
And seems to dare the elements to strife.
Who would not brave the battle-fire—the wreck—
To move the monarch of her peopled deck?

IV.

Hoarse o'er her side the rustling cable rings;
The sails are furl'd; and anchoring, round she swings;
And gathering loiterers on the land discern
Her boat descending from the latticed stern.
'Tis mann'd—the oars keep concert to the strand
Till grates her keel upon the shallow sand.
Hail to the welcome shout!—the friendly speech!
When hand grasps hand uniting on the beach;
The smile, the question, and the quick reply,
And the heart's promise of festivity!

V.

The tidings spread, and gathering grows the crowd:
The hum of voices, and the laughter loud,
And woman's gentler anxious tone is heard—
Friends'—husbands'—lovers' names in each dear word:
"Oh! are they safe? we ask not of success—
But shall we see them? will their accents bless?
From where the battle roars—the billows chafe—
They doubtless boldly did—but who are safe?
Here let them haste to gladden and surprise,
And kiss the doubt from these delighted eyes!"

VI.

"Where is our chief? for him we bear report—
And doubt that joy—which hails our coming—short;
Yet thus sincere—'tis cheering, though so brief;
But, Juan! instant guide us to our chief:
Our greeting paid, we'll feast on our return,
And all shall hear what each may wish to learn."
Ascending slowly by the rock-hewn way,
To where his watch-tower beetles o'er the bay,
By bushy brake, and wild flowers blossoming,
And freshness breathing from each silver spring,
Whose scatter'd streams from granite basins burst,
Leap into life, and sparkling woo your thirst;
From crag to cliff they mount.—Near yonder cave,
What lonely straggler looks along the wave?
In pensive posture leaning on the brand,
Not oft a resting-staff to that red hand?
"'Tis he—'tis Conrad—here—as wont—alone;

On—Juan!—on—and make our purpose known.
The bark he views—and tell him we would greet
His ear with tidings he must quickly meet:
We dare not yet approach—thou know'st his mood,
When strange or uninvited steps intrude."

VII.

Him Juan sought, and told of their intent;—
He spake not—but a sign express'd assent.
These Juan calls—they come—to their salute
He bends him slightly, but his lips are mute.
"These letters, Chief, are from the Greek—the spy,
Who still proclaims our spoil or peril nigh:
Whate'er his tidings, we can well report
Much that"—"Peace, peace!"—he cuts their prating short.
Wondering they turn, abash'd, while each to each
Conjecture whispers in his muttering speech:
They watch his glance with many a stealing look,
To gather how that eye the tidings took;
But, this as if he guess'd, with head aside,
Perchance from some emotion, doubt, or pride,
He read the scroll—"My tablets, Juan, hark—
Where is Gonsalvo?"
"In the anchor'd bark."
"There let him stay—to him this order bear.
Back to your duty—for my course prepare:
Myself this enterprise to-night will share."
"To-night, Lord Conrad?"
"Ay! at set of sun:
The breeze will freshen when the day is done.
My corselet—cloak—one hour—and we are gone.
Sling on thy bugle—see that free from rust
My carbine-lock springs worthy of my trust;
Be the edge sharpen'd of my boarding-brand,
And give its guard more room to fit my hand.
This let the Armorer with speed dispose;
Last time, it more fatigued my arm than foes:
Mark that the signal-gun be duly fired,
To tell us when the hour of stay 's expired."

VIII.

They make obeisance, and retire in haste,
Too soon to seek again the watery waste:
Yet they repine not—so that Conrad guides,
And who dare question aught that he decides?
That man of loneliness and mystery,
Scarce seen to smile, and seldom heard to sigh;
Whose name appalls the fiercest of his crew,
And tints each swarthy cheek with sallower hue;
Still sways their souls with that commanding art
That dazzles, leads, yet chills the vulgar heart.
What is that spell, that thus his lawless train
Confess and envy, yet oppose in vain?
What should it be, that thus their faith can bind?
The power of Thought—the magic of the Mind!

Link'd with success, assumed and kept with skill,
That moulds another's weakness to its will;
Wields with their hands, but, still to these unknown,
Makes even their mightiest deeds appear his own.
Such hath it been—shall be—beneath the sun:
The many still must labor for the one!
'Tis Nature's doom—but let the wretch who toils,
Accuse not, hate not *him* who wears the spoils.
Oh! if he knew the weight of splendid chains,
How light the balance of his humbler pains!

IX.

Unlike the heroes of each ancient race,
Demons in act, but gods at least in face,
In Conrad's form seems little to admire,
Though his dark eyebrow shades a glance of fire:
Robust but not herculean—to the sight
No giant frame sets forth his common height;
Yet, in the whole, who paused to look again,
Saw more than marks the crowd of vulgar men;
They gaze and marvel how—and still confess
That thus it is, but why, they cannot guess.
Sun-burnt his cheek, his forehead high and pale
The sable curls in wild profusion veil;
And oft perforce his rising lip reveals
The haughtier thought it curbs, but scarce conceals.
Though smooth his voice, and calm his general mien,
Still seems there something he would not have seen;
His features' deepening lines and varying hue
At times attracted, yet perplex'd the view,
As if within that murkiness of mind
Work'd feelings fearful, and yet undefined;
Such might it be—that none could truly tell—
Too close inquiry his stern glance would quell.
There breathe but few whose aspect might defy
The full encounter of his searching eye:
He had the skill, when Cunning's gaze would seek
To probe his heart and watch his changing cheek,
At once the observer's purpose to espy,
And on himself roll back his scrutiny,
Lest he to Conrad rather should betray
Some secret thought, than drag that chief's to day.
There was a laughing devil in his sneer,
That raised emotions both of rage and fear;
And where his frown of hatred darkly fell,
Hope withering fled—and Mercy sigh'd farewell!

X.

Slight are the outward signs of evil thought,
Within—within—'twas there the spirit wrought!
Love shows all changes—Hate, Ambition, Guile,
Betray no further than the bitter smile;
The lip's least curl, the lightest paleness thrown
Along the govern'd aspect, speak alone
Of deeper passions; and to judge their mien,
He, who would see, must be himself unseen.

Then—with the hurried tread, the upward eye,
The clenched hand, the pause of agony,
That listens, starting, lest the step too near
Approach intrusive on that mood of fear:
Then—with each feature working from the heart,
With feelings loosed to strengthen—not depart:
That rise—convulse—contend—that freeze, or glow,
Flush in the cheek, or damp upon the brow;
Then—Stranger! if thou canst, and tremblest not,
Behold his soul—the rest that soothes his lot!
Mark—how that lone and blighted bosom sears
The scathing thought of execrated years!
Behold—but who hath seen, or e'er shall see,
Man as himself—the secret spirit free?

XI.

Yet was not Conrad thus by Nature sent
To lead the guilty—guilt's worst instrument—
His soul was changed, before his deeds had driven
Him forth to war with man and forfeit heaven.
Warp'd by the world in Disappointment's school,
In words too wise, in conduct *there* a fool;
Too firm to yield, and far too proud to stoop,
Doom'd by his very virtues for a dupe,
He cursed those virtues as the cause of ill,
And not the traitors who betray'd him still;
Nor deem'd that gifts bestow'd on better men
Had left him joy, and means to give again.
Fear'd—shunn'd—belied—ere youth had lost her force,
He hated man too much to feel remorse,
And thought the voice of wrath a sacred call,
To pay the injuries of some on all.
He knew himself a villain—but he deem'd
The rest no better than the thing he seem'd;
And scorn'd the best as hypocrites who hid
Those deeds the bolder spirit plainly did.
He knew himself detested, but he knew
The hearts that loathed him, crouch'd and dreaded too.
Lone, wild, and strange, he stood alike exempt
From all affection and from all contempt:
His name could sadden, and his acts surprise:
But they that fear'd him dared not to despise.
Man spurns the worm, but pauses ere he wake
The slumbering venom of the folded snake:
The first may turn—but not avenge the blow;
The last expires—but leaves no living foe;
Fast to the doom'd offender's form it clings,
And he may crush—not conquer—still it stings!

XII.

None are all evil—quickening round his heart,
One softer feeling would not yet depart;
Oft could he sneer at others, as beguiled
By passions worthy of a fool or child;
Yet 'gainst that passion vainly still he strove,
And even in him it asks the name of Love!

Yes, it was love—unchangeable—unchanged,
Felt but for one from whom he never ranged;
Though fairest captives daily met his eye,
He shunn'd, nor sought, but coldly pass'd them by;
Though many a beauty droop'd in prison'd bower,
None ever soothed his most unguarded hour.
Yes—it was Love—if thoughts of tenderness,
Tried in temptation, strengthen'd by distress,
Unmoved by absence, firm in every clime,
And yet—oh more than all!—untired by time;
Which nor defeated hope, nor baffled wile,
Could render sullen were she near to smile,
Nor rage could fire, nor sickness fret to vent
On her one murmur of his discontent;
Which still would meet with joy, with calmness part,
Lest that his look of grief should reach her heart;
Which naught removed, nor menaced to remove—
If there be love in mortals—this was love!
He was a villain—ay—reproaches shower
On him—but not the passion, nor its power,
Which only proved, all other virtues gone,
Not guilt itself could quench this loveliest one!

* * * * * *

XIII.

He paused a moment—till his hastening men
Pass'd the first winding downward to the glen.
"Strange tidings!—many a peril have I past,
Nor know I why this next appears the last!
Yet so my heart forebodes, but must not fear,
Nor shall my followers find me falter here.
'Tis rash to meet, but surer death to wait
Till here they hunt us to undoubted fate;
And, if my plan but hold, and Fortune smile,
We'll furnish mourners for our funeral-pile.
Ay—let them slumber—peaceful be their dreams!
Morn ne'er awoke them with such brilliant beams
As kindle high to-night (but blow, thou breeze!)
To warm these slow avengers of the seas.
Now to Medora—Oh! my sinking heart,
Long may her own be lighter than thou art!
Yet was I brave—mean boast where all are brave!
Even insects sting for aught they seek to save.
This common courage which with brutes we share,
That owes its deadliest efforts to despair,
Small merit claims—but 'twas my nobler hope
To teach my few with numbers still to cope;
Long have I led them—not to vainly bleed:
No medium now—we perish or succeed!
So let it be—it irks not me to die;
But thus to urge them whence they cannot fly.
My lot hath long had little of my care,
But chafes my pride thus baffled in the snare:
Is this my skill? my craft? to set at last
Hope, power, and life upon a single cast?

Oh, Fate:—accuse thy folly, not thy fate—
She may redeem thee still—nor yet too late."

XIV.

Thus with himself communion held he, till
He reach'd the summit of his tower-crown'd hill;
There at the portal paused—for wild and soft
He heard those accents never heard too oft;
Through the high lattice far yet sweet they rung,
And these the notes his bird of beauty sung:—

1.

"Deep in my soul that tender secret dwells,
Lonely and lost to light for evermore,
Save when to thine my heart responsive swells,
Then trembles into silence as before.

2.

"There, in its centre, a sepulchral lamp,
Burns the slow flame, eternal—but unseen;
Which not the darkness of despair can damp,
Though vain its ray as it had never been.

3.

"Remember me—Oh! pass not thou my grave
Without one thought whose relics there recline.
The only pang my bosom dare not brave
Must be to find forgetfulness in thine.

4.

"My fondest—faintest—latest accents hear:
Grief for the dead not Virtue can reprove;
Then give me all I ever ask'd—a tear,
The first—last—sole reward of so much love!"

He pass'd the portal—cross'd the corridor,
And reach'd the chamber as the strain gave o'er:
"My own Medora! sure thy song is sad—"

"In Conrad's absence wouldst thou have it glad?
Without thine ear to listen to my lay,
Still must my song my thoughts, my soul betray:
Still must each accent to my bosom suit,
My heart unhush'd—although my lips were mute!
Oh! many a night, on this lone couch reclined,
My dreaming fear with storms hath wing'd the wind,
And deem'd the breath that faintly fann'd thy sail
The murmuring prelude of the ruder gale;
Though soft, it seem'd the low prophetic dirge,
That mourn'd thee floating on the savage surge:
Still would I rise to rouse the beacon-fire,
Lest spies less true should let the blaze expire:
And many a restless hour outwatch'd each star,
And morning came—and still thou wert afar.
Oh! how the chill blast on my bosom blew,
And day broke dreary on my troubled view,
And still I gazed and gazed—and not a prow
Was granted to my tears—my truth—my vow!

At length—'twas noon—I hail'd and blest the mast
That met my sight—it near'd—Alas! it pass'd!
Another came—O God! 'twas thine at last!
Would that those days were over! wilt thou ne'er,
My Conrad! learn the joys of peace to share?
Sure thou hast more than wealth, and many a home
As bright as this invites us not to roam:
Thou know'st it is not peril that I fear,
I only tremble when thou art not here;
Then not for mine, but that far dearer life,
Which flies from love and languishes for strife—
How strange that heart, to me so tender still,
Should war with nature and its better will!"

"Yea, strange indeed—that heart hath long been changed:
Worm-like 'twas trampled—adder-like avenged,
Without one hope on earth beyond thy love,
And scarce a glimpse of mercy from above.
Yet the same feeling which thou dost condemn,
My very love to thee is hate to them,
So closely mingling here, that disentwined,
I cease to love thee when I love mankind:
Yet dread not this—the proof of all the past
Assures the future that my love will last;
But—O Medora! nerve thy gentler heart,
This hour again—but not for long—we part."

"This hour we part!—my heart foreboded this!
Thus ever fade my fairy dreams of bliss.
This hour—it cannot be—this hour away!
Yon bark hath hardly anchor'd in the bay:
Her consort still is absent, and her crew
Have need of rest before they toil anew:
My love! thou mock'st my weakness; and wouldst steel
My breast before the time when it must feel;
But trifle now no more with my distress,
Such mirth hath less of play than bitterness.
Be silent, Conrad!—dearest! come and share
The feast these hands delighted to prepare;
Light toil! to cull and dress thy frugal fare!
See, I have pluck'd the fruit that promised best,
And where not sure, perplex'd, but pleased, I guess'd
At such as seem'd the fairest: thrice the hill
My steps have wound to try the coolest rill;
Yes! thy sherbet to-night will sweetly flow,
See how it sparkles in its vase of snow!
The grapes' gay juice thy bosom never cheers;
Thou more than Moslem when the cup appears:
Think not I mean to chide—for I rejoice
What others deem a penance is thy choice.
But come, the board is spread; our silver lamp
Is trimm'd, and heeds not the Sirocco's damp.
Then shall my handmaids while the time along,
And join with me the dance, or wake the song;
Or my guitar, which still thou lov'st to hear,
Shall soothe or lull—or, should it vex thine ear,

We'll turn the tale, by Ariosto told,
Of fair Olympia loved and left of old.*
Why—thou wert worse than he who broke his vow
To that lost damsel, shouldst thou leave me now;
Or even that traitor chief—I've seen thee smile,
When the clear sky show'd Ariadne's Isle,
Which I have pointed from these cliffs the while:
And thus, half sportive, half in fear, I said,
Lest Time should raise that doubt to more than dread,
Thus Conrad, too, will quit me for the main:
And he deceived me—for—he came again!"

"Again—again—and oft again—my love!
If there be life below, and hope above,
He will return—but now the moments bring
The time of parting with redoubled wing:
The why—the where—what boots it now to tell?
Since all must end in that wild word—farewell!
Yet would I fain—did time allow—disclose—
Fear not—these are no formidable foes;
And here shall watch a more than wonted guard,
For sudden siege and long defence prepared:
Nor be thou lonely—though thy lord's away,
Our matrons and thy handmaids with thee stay;
And this thy comfort—that when next we meet,
Security shall make repose more sweet.
List!—'tis the bugle"—Juan shrilly blew—
"One kiss—one more—another—Oh! Adieu!"

She rose—she sprung—she clung to his embrace,
Till his heart heaved beneath her hidden face.
He dared not raise to his that deep-blue eye,
Which downcast droop'd in tearless agony.
Her long fair hair lay floating o'er his arms,
In all the wildness of dishevell'd charms;
Scarce beat that bosom where his image dwelt
So full—*that* feeling seem'd almost unfelt!
Hark—peals the thunder of the signal-gun!
It told 'twas sunset—and he cursed that sun.
Again—again—that form he madly press'd
Which mutely clasp'd, imploringly caress'd!
And tottering to the couch his bride he bore,
One moment gazed—as if to gaze no more;
Felt—that for him earth held but her alone,
Kiss'd her cold forehead—turn'd—is Conrad gone?

XV.

"And is he gone?"—on sudden solitude
How oft that fearful question will intrude!
"'Twas but an instant past—and here he stood!
And now"—without the portal's porch she rush'd,
And then at length her tears in freedom gush'd;
Big—bright—and fast, unknown to her they fell;
But still her lips refused to send—"Farewell!"

* "Orlando Furioso," Canto 10.

For in that word—that fatal word—howe'er
We promise—hope—believe—there breathes despair.
O'er every feature of that still, pale face,
Had sorrow fix'd what time can ne'er erase:
The tender blue of that large loving eye
Grew frozen with its gaze on vacancy.
Till—oh, how far!—it caught a glimpse of him,
And then it flow'd—and frenzied seem'd to swim,
Through those long, dark, and glistening lashes dew'd
With drops of sadness oft to be renew'd.
"He's gone!"—against her heart that hand is driven,
Convulsed and quick—then gently raised to heaven;
She look'd and saw the heaving of the main;
The white sail set—she dared not look again;
But turn'd with sickening soul within the gate—
"It is no dream—and I am desolate!"

XVI.

From crag to crag descending—swiftly sped
Stern Conrad down, nor once he turn'd his head;
But shrunk whene'er the windings of his way
Forced on his eye what he would not survey,
His lone, but lovely dwelling on the steep,
That hail'd him first when homeward from the deep:
And she—the dim and melancholy star,
Whose ray of beauty reach'd him from afar,
On her he must not gaze, he must not think,
There he might rest—but on Destruction's brink;
Yet once almost he stopp'd—and nearly gave
His fate to chance, his projects to the wave;
But no—it must not be—a worthy chief
May melt, but not betray to woman's grief.
He sees his bark, he notes how fair the wind,
And sternly gathers all his might of mind:
Again he hurries on—and as he hears
The clang of tumult vibrate on his ears,
The busy sounds, the bustle of the shore,
The shout, the signal, and the dashing oar;
As marks his eye the sea-boy on the mast,
The anchors rise, the sails unfurling fast,
The waving kerchiefs of the crowd that urge
That mute adieu to those who stem the surge;
And more than all, his blood-red flag aloft,
He marvell'd how his heart could seem so soft.
Fire in his glance, and wildness in his breast,
He feels of all his former self possest;
He bounds—he flies—until his footsteps reach
The verge where ends the cliff, begins the beach,
There checks his speed; but pauses less to breathe
The breezy freshness of the deep beneath,
Than there his wonted statelier step renew;
Nor rush, disturb'd by haste, to vulgar view:
For well had Conrad learn'd to curb the crowd,
By arts that veil, and oft preserve the proud;
His was the lofty port, the distant mien,
That seems to shun the sight—and awes if seen:

The solemn aspect, and the high-born eye,
That checks low mirth, but lacks not courtesy;
All these he wielded to command assent:
But where he wish'd to win, so well unbent,
That kindness cancell'd fear in those who heard,
And others' gifts show'd mean beside his word,
When echo'd to the heart as from his own,
His deep yet tender melody of tone:
But such was foreign to his wonted mood,
He cared not what he soften'd but subdued;
The evil passions of his youth had made
Him value less who loved—than what obey'd.

XVII.

Around him mustering ranged his ready guard.
Before him Juan stands—"Are all prepared?"

"They are—nay, more—embark'd: the latest boat
Waits but my chief—"
"My sword, and my capote."
Soon firmly girded on and lightly slung,
His belt and cloak were o'er his shoulders flung:
"Call Pedro here!"—He comes—and Conrad bends,
With all the courtesy he deign'd his friends;
"Receive these tablets, and peruse with care,
Words of high trust and truth are graven there;
Double the guard, and when Anselmo's bark
Arrives, let him alike these orders mark:
In three days (serve the breeze) the sun shall shine
On our return—till then all peace be thine!"
This said, his brother Pirate's hand he wrung,
Then to his boat with haughty gesture sprung.
Flash'd the dipt oars, and sparkling with the stroke,
Around the waves' phosphoric* brightness broke;
They gain the vessel—on the deck he stands,
Shrieks the shrill whistle—ply the busy hands—
He marks how well the ship her helm obeys,
How gallant all her crew—and deigns to praise.
His eyes of pride to young Gonsalvo turn—
Why doth he start, and inly seem to mourn?
Alas! those eyes behold his rocky tower,
And live a moment o'er the parting hour;
She—his Medora—did she mark the prow?
Ah! never loved he half so much as now!
But much must yet be done ere dawn of day—
Again he mans himself and turns away;
Down to the cabin with Gonsalvo bends,
And there unfolds his plan—his means—and ends;
Before them burns the lamp, and spreads the chart,
And all that speaks and aids the naval art;
They to the midnight watch protract debate;
To anxious eyes what hour is ever late?

* By night, particularly in a warm latitude, every stroke of the oar, every motion of the boat or ship, is followed by a slight flash like sheet-lightning from the water.

Meantime, the steady breeze serenely blew,
And fast and falcon-like the vessel flew;
Pass'd the high headlands of each clustering isle,
To gain their port—long—long ere morning smile:
And soon the night-glass through the narrow bay
Discovers where the Pacha's galleys lay.
Count they each sail—and mark how there supine
The lights in vain o'er heedless Moslem shine.
Secure, unnoted, Conrad's prow pass'd by,
And anchor'd where his ambush meant to lie;
Screen'd from espial by the jutting cape,
That rears on high its rude fantastic shape.
Then rose his band to duty—not from sleep—
Equipp'd for deeds alike on land or deep;
While lean'd their leader o'er the fretting flood,
And calmly talk'd—and yet he talk'd of blood!

CANTO THE SECOND.

"Conoscesti i dubiosi desiri?"—DANTE.

I.

In Coron's bay floats many a galley light,
Through Coron's lattices the lamps are bright,
For Seyd, the Pacha, makes a feast to-night:
A feast for promised triumph yet to come,
When he shall drag the fetter'd Rovers home;
This hath he sworn by Alla and his sword,
And faithful to his firman and his word,
His summon'd prows collect along the coast,
And great the gathering crews, and loud the boast;
Already shared the captives and the prize,
Though far the distant foe they thus despise;
'Tis but to sail—no doubt to-morrow's sun
Will see the Pirates bound—their haven won!
Meantime the watch may slumber, if they will,
Nor only wake to war, but dreaming kill.
Though all, who can, disperse on shore and seek
To flesh their glowing valor on the Greek;
How well such deed becomes the turban'd brave
To bare the sabre's edge before a slave!
Infest his dwelling—but forbear to slay,
Their arms are strong, yet merciful to-day,
And do not deign to smite because they may!
Unless some gay caprice suggests the blow,
To keep in practice for the coming foe.
Revel and rout the evening hours beguile,
And they who wish to wear a head must smile;
For Moslem mouths produce their choicest cheer,
And hoard their curses, till the coast is clear.

II.

High in his hall reclines the turban'd Seyd;
Around—the bearded chiefs he came to lead.

Removed the banquet, and the last pilaff—
Forbidden draughts, 'tis said, he dared to quaff,
Though to the rest the sober berry's juice,*
The slaves bear round for rigid Moslems' use;
The long Chibouques† dissolving cloud supply,
While dance the Almas‡ to wild minstrelsy.
The rising morn will view the chiefs embark;
But waves are somewhat treacherous in the dark;
And revellers may more securely sleep
On silken couch than o'er the rugged deep,
Feast there who can—nor combat till they must,
And less to conquest than to Korans trust;
And yet the numbers crowded in his host
Might warrant more than even the Pacha's boast.

III.

With cautious reverence from the outer gate,
Slow stalks the slave, whose office there to wait,
Bows his bent head—his hand salutes the floor,
Ere yet his tongue the trusted tidings bore:
"A captive Dervise, from the Pirates' nest
Escaped, is here—himself would tell the rest."§
He took the sign from Seyd's assenting eye,
And led the holy man in silence nigh.
His arms were folded on his dark-green vest,
His step was feeble, and his look deprest;
Yet worn he seem'd of hardship more than years,
And pale his cheek with penance, not from fears.
Vow'd to his God—his sable locks he wore,
And these his lofty cap rose proudly o'er;
Around his form his loose long robe was thrown,
And wrapt a breast bestow'd on Heaven alone;
Submissive, yet with self-possession mann'd,
He calmly met the curious eyes that scann'd;

* Coffee. † Pipe. ‡ Dancing-girls.

§ It has been objected that Conrad's entering disguised as a spy is out of nature;—perhaps so. I find something not unlike it in history.

"Anxious to explore with his own eyes the state of the Vandals, Majorian ventured, after disguising the color of his hair, to visit Carthage in the character of his own ambassador; and Genseric was afterwards mortified by the discovery that he had entertained and dismissed the Emperor of the Romans. Such an anecdote may be rejected as an improbable fiction; but it is a fiction which would not have been imagined unless in the life of a hero."—*Gibbon, Decline and Fall*, vol. vi. p. 180.

That Conrad is a character not altogether out of nature, I shall attempt to prove by some historical coincidences which I have met with since writing "The Corsair."

"Eccelin prisonnier," dit Rolandini, "s'enfermoit dans un silence menaçant, il fixoit sur la terre son visage féroce, et ne donnoit point d'essor à sa profonde indignation.—De toutes parts cependant les soldats et les peuples accouroient; ils vouloient voir cet homme, jadis si puissant, et la joie universelle éclatoit de toutes parts. . . . Eccelin étoit d'une petite taille; mais tout l'aspect de sa personne, tous ses mouvemens, indiquoient un soldat.—Son langage étoit amer, son déportement superbe—et par son seul égard, il faisoit trembler les plus hardis."—*Sismondi*, tome iii. pp. 219, 220.

"Gizericus (Genseric, king of the Vandals, the conqueror of both Carthage and Rome) staturâ mediocris, et equi casu claudicans, animo profundus, sermone rarus, luxuriæ contemptor, irâ turbidus, habendi cupidus, ad solicitandas gentes providentissimus," etc., etc.—*Jornandes de Rebus Geticis*, c. 33.

I beg leave to quote these gloomy realities to keep in countenance my Giaour and Corsair.

And question of his coming fain would seek,
Before the Pacha's will allow'd to speak.

IV.

"Whence com'st thou, Dervise?"
"From the outlaws' den
A fugitive—"
"Thy capture where and when?"
"From Scalanovo's port to Scio's isle,
The Saick was bound; but Alla did not smile
Upon our course—the Moslem merchant's gains
The Rovers won: our limbs have worn their chains.
I had no death to fear, nor wealth to boast,
Beyond the wandering freedom which I lost;
At length a fisher's humble boat by night
Afforded hope, and offer'd chance of flight:
I seized the hour, and find my safety here—
With thee—most mighty Pacha! who can fear?"

"How speed the outlaws? stand they well prepared
Their plunder'd wealth, and robbers' rock, to guard?
Dream they of this our preparation, doom'd
To view with fire their scorpion nest consumed?"

"Pacha! the fetter'd captive's mourning eye,
That weeps for flight, but ill can play the spy;
I only heard the reckless waters roar,
Those waves that would not bear me from the shore;
I only mark'd the glorious sun and sky,
Too bright—too blue—for my captivity;
And felt—that all which Freedom's bosom cheers,
Must break my chain before it dried my tears.
This may'st thou judge, at least, from my escape,
They little deem of aught in peril's shape;
Else vainly had I pray'd or sought the chance
That leads me here—if eyed with vigilance:
The careless guard that did not see me fly,
May watch as idly when thy power is nigh.
Pacha!—my limbs are faint—and nature craves
Food for my hunger, rest from tossing waves:
Permit my absence—peace be with thee! Peace
With all around!—now grant repose—release."

"Stay, Dervise! I have more to question—stay,
I do command thee—sit—dost hear?—obey!
More I must ask, and food the slaves shall bring;
Thou shalt not pine where all are banqueting:
The supper done—prepare thee to reply,
Clearly and full—I love not mystery."

'Twere vain to guess what shook the pious man
Who look'd not lovingly on that Divan;
Nor show'd high relish for the banquet prest,
And less respect for every fellow-guest.
'Twas but a moment's peevish hectic past
Along his cheek, and tranquillized as fast:

He sate him down in silence, and his look
Resumed the calmness which before forsook:
The feast was usher'd in—but sumptuous fare
He shunn'd as if some poison mingled there.
For one so long condemn'd to toil and fast,
Methinks he strangely spares the rich repast.

"What ails thee, Dervise? eat—dost thou suppose
This feast a Christian's? or my friends thy foes?
Why dost thou shun the salt? that sacred pledge,
Which, once partaken, blunts the sabre's edge,
Makes even contending tribes in peace unite,
And hated hosts seem brethren to the sight!"

"Salt seasons dainties—and my food is still
The humblest root, my drink the simplest rill;
And my stern vow and Order's* laws oppose
To break or mingle bread with friends or foes;
It may seem strange—if there be aught to dread,
That peril rests upon my single head;
But for thy sway—nay more—thy Sultan's throne,
I taste nor bread nor banquet—save alone;
Infringed our Order's rule, the Prophet's rage
To Mecca's dome might bar my pilgrimage."

"Well—as thou wilt—ascetic as thou art—
One question answer; then in peace depart.
How many?—Ha! it cannot sure be day?
What star—what sun is bursting on the bay?
It shines a lake of fire!—away—away!
Ho! treachery! my guards! my scimitar!
The galleys feed the flames—and I afar!
Accursèd Dervise!—these thy tidings—thou
Some villain spy—seize—cleave him—slay him now!"

Up rose the Dervise with that burst of light,
Nor less his change of form appall'd the sight:
Up rose that Dervise—not in saintly garb,
But like a warrior bounding on his barb,
Dash'd his high cap, and tore his robe away—
Shone his mail'd breast, and flash'd his sabre's ray!
His close but glittering casque, and sable plume,
More glittering eye, and black brow's sabler gloom
Glared on the Moslems' eyes some Afrit sprite,
Whose demon death-blow left no hope for fight.
The wild confusion, and the swarthy glow
Of flames on high, and torches from below!
The shriek of terror, and the mingling yell—
For swords began to clash, and shouts to swell—
Flung o'er that spot of earth the air of hell!
Distracted, to and fro, the flying slaves
Behold but bloody shore and fiery waves;
Nought heeded they the Pacha's angry cry,
They seize that Dervise!—seize on Zatanai!†

* The dervises are in colleges, and of different orders, as the monks.
† Satan.

"Up rose that Dervise — not in saintly garb,
But like a warrior bounding on his barb."

Page 18.

He saw their terror—check'd the first despair
That urged him but to stand and perish there,
Since far too early and too well obey'd,
The flame was kindled ere the signal made;
He saw their terror—from his baldric drew
His bugle—brief the blast—but shrilly blew:
'Tis answer'd—"Well ye speed, my gallant crew!
Why did I doubt their quickness of career?
And deem design had left me single here?"
Sweeps his long arm—that sabre's whirling sway
Sheds fast atonement for its first delay;
Completes his fury what their fear begun,
And makes the many basely quail to one.
The cloven turbans o'er the chamber spread,
And scarce an arm dare rise to guard its head:
Even Seyd, convulsed, o'erwhelm'd with rage, surprise,
Retreats before him, though he still defies.
No craven he—and yet he dreads the blow,
So much confusion magnifies his foe!
His blazing galleys still distract his sight,
He tore his beard, and foaming fled the fight;*
For now the pirates pass'd the Harem gate,
And burst within—and it were death to wait;
Where wild Amazement shrieking—kneeling throws
The sword aside—in vain—the blood o'erflows!
The Corsairs pouring, haste to where within
Invited Conrad's bugle, and the din
Of groaning victims, and wild cries for life,
Proclaim'd how well he did the work of strife.
They shout to find him grim and lonely there,
A glutted tiger mangling in his lair!
But short their greeting—shorter his reply—
"'Tis well—but Seyd escapes—and he must die—
Much hath been done—but more remains to do—
Their galleys blaze—why not their city too?"

V.

Quick at the word—they seized him each a torch,
And fire the dome from minaret to porch.
A stern delight was fix'd in Conrad's eye,
But sudden sunk—for on his ear the cry
Of women struck, and like a deadly knell
Knock'd at that heart unmoved by battle's yell.
"Oh! burst the Harem—wrong not on your lives
One female form—remember—*we* have wives.
On them such outrage Vengeance will repay;
Man is our foe, and such 'tis ours to slay;
But still we spare—must spare the weaker prey.
Oh! I forgot—but Heaven will not forgive,
If at my word the helpless cease to live:
Follow who will—I go—we yet have time
Our souls to lighten of at least a crime."

* A common and not very novel effect of Mussulman anger. See "Prince Eugene's Memoirs," p. 24. "The Seraskier received a wound in the thigh; he plucked up his beard by the roots, because he was obliged to quit the field."

He climbs the crackling stair—he bursts the door,
Nor feels his feet glow scorching with the floor;
His breath choked gasping with the volumed smoke,
But still from room to room his way he broke.
They search—they find—they save: with lusty arms
Each bears a prize of unregarded charms;
Calm their loud fears; sustain their sinking frames
With all the care defenceless beauty claims:
So well could Conrad tame their fiercest mood,
And check the very hands with gore imbrued.
But who is she? whom Conrad's arms convey
From reeking pile and combat's wreck—away—
Who but the love of him he dooms to bleed?
The Harem queen—but still the slave of Seyd!

VI.

Brief time had Conrad now to greet Gulnare,*
Few words to reassure the trembling fair;
For in that pause compassion snatch'd from war,
The foe before retiring, fast and far,
With wonder saw their footsteps unpursued,
First slowlier fled—then rallied—then withstood.
This Seyd perceives, then first perceives how few,
Compared with his, the Corsair's roving crew,
And blushes o'er his error, as he eyes
The ruin wrought by panic and surprise.
Alla il Alla! Vengeance swells the cry—
Shame mounts to rage that must atone or die!
And flame for flame and blood for blood must tell,
The tide of triumph ebbs that flow'd too well—
When wrath returns to renovated strife,
And those who fought for conquest strike for life
Conrad beheld the danger—he beheld
His followers faint by freshening foes repell'd:
"One effort—one—to break the circling host!"
They form—unite—charge—waver—all is lost!
Within a narrower ring compress'd, beset,
Hopeless, not heartless, strive and struggle yet—
Ah! now they fight in firmest file no more,
Hemm'd in—cut off—cleft down—and trampled o'er;
But each strikes singly, silently, and home,
And sinks outwearied rather than o'ercome,
His last faint quittance rendering with his breath,
Till the blade glimmers in the grasp of death!

VII.

But first, ere came the rallying host to blows,
And rank to rank, and hand to hand oppose,
Gulnare and all her Harem handmaids freed,
Safe in the dome of one who held their creed,
By Conrad's mandate safely were bestow'd,
And dried those tears for life and fame that flow'd.
And when that dark-eyed lady, young Gulnare,
Recall'd those thoughts late wandering in despair,

* Gulnare, a female name. It means, literally, the flower of the pomegranate

Much did she marvel o'er the courtesy
That smooth'd his accents; soften'd in his eye:
'Twas strange—*that* robber thus with gore bedew'd
Seem'd gentler then than Seyd in fondest mood.
The Pacha woo'd as if he deem'd the slave
Must seem delighted with the heart he gave;
The Corsair vow'd protection, soothed affright,
As if his homage were a woman's right.
"The wish is wrong—nay, worse for female—vain:
Yet much I long to view that chief again;
If but to thank for, what my fear forgot,
The life—my loving lord remember'd not!"

VIII.

And him she saw, where thickest carnage spread,
But gather'd breathing from the happier dead;
Far from his band, and battling with a host
That deem right dearly won the field he lost,
Fell'd—bleeding—baffled of the death he sought,
And snatch'd to expiate all the ills he wrought;
Preserved to linger and to live in vain,
While Vengeance ponder'd o'er new plans of pain,
And stanch'd the blood she saves to shed again—
But drop by drop, for Seyd's unglutted eye
Would doom him ever dying—ne'er to die!
Can this be he? triumphant late she saw,
When his red hand's wild gesture waved, a law!
'Tis he indeed—disarm'd but undeprest,
His sole regret the life he still possest;
His wounds too slight, though taken with that will,
Which would have kiss'd the hand that then could kill.
Oh, were there none, of all the many given,
To send his soul—he scarcely ask'd to heaven!
Must he alone of all retain his breath,
Who more than all had striven and struck for death?
He deeply felt—what mortal hearts must feel,
When thus reversed on faithless Fortune's wheel,
For crimes committed, and the victor's threat
Of lingering tortures to repay the debt—
He deeply, darkly felt; but evil pride
That led to perpetrate—now nerves to hide.
Still in his stern and self-collected mien
A conqueror's more than captive's air is seen;
Though faint with wasting toil and stiffening wound,
But few that saw—so calmly gazed around:
Though the far-shouting of the distant crowd,
Their tremors o'er, rose insolently loud,
The better warriors who beheld him near,
Insulted not the foe who taught them fear;
And the grim guards that to his durance led,
In silence eyed him with a secret dread.

IX.

The Leech was sent—but not in mercy—there,
To note how much the life yet left could bear;

He found enough to load with heaviest chain,
And promise feeling for the wrench of pain:
To-morrow—yea—to-morrow's evening sun
Will sinking see impalement's pangs begun,
And rising with the wonted blush of morn
Behold how well or ill those pangs are borne.
Of torments this the longest and the worst,
Which adds all other agony to thirst,
That day by day death still forbears to slake,
While famish'd vultures flit around the stake.
"Oh! water—water!"—smiling Hate denies
The victim's prayer—for if he drinks—he dies.
This was his doom:—the Leech, the guard, were gone,
And left proud Conrad fetter'd and alone.

X.

'Twere vain to paint to what his feelings grew—
It even were doubtful if their victim knew.
There is a war, a chaos of the mind,
When all its elements convulsed—combined—
Lie dark and jarring with perturbed force,
And gnashing with impenitent Remorse;
That juggling fiend—who never spake before—
But cries, "I warn'd thee!" when the deed is o'er.
Vain voice! the spirit burning but unbent,
May writhe—rebel—the weak alone repent!
Even in that lonely hour when most it feels,
And, to itself, all—all that self reveals,
No single passion, and no ruling thought
That leaves the rest as once unseen, unsought;
But the wild prospect when the soul reviews—
All rushing through their thousand avenues,
Ambition's dreams expiring, love's regret,
Endanger'd glory, life itself beset;
The joy untasted, the contempt or hate
'Gainst those who fain would triumph in our fate;
The hopeless past, the hasting future driven
Too quickly on to guess if hell or heaven;
Deeds, thoughts, and words, perhaps remember'd not
So keenly till that hour, but ne'er forgot;
Things light or lovely in their acted time,
But now to stern reflection each a crime:
The withering sense of evil unreveal'd,
Not cankering less because the more conceal'd—
All, in a word, from which all eyes must start,
That opening sepulchre—the naked heart,
Bares with its buried woes, till Pride awake,
To snatch the mirror from the soul—and break.
Ay—Pride can veil, and Courage brave it all,
All—all—before—beyond—the deadliest fall.
Each hath some fear, and he who least betrays,
The only hypocrite deserving praise:
Not the loud recreant wretch who boasts and flies;
But he who looks on death—and silent dies.
So steel'd by pondering o'er his far career,
He half-way meets him should he menace near!

XI.

In the high chamber of his highest tower
Sate Conrad, fetter'd in the Pacha's power.
His palace perish'd in the flame—this fort
Contain'd at once his captive and his court.
Not much could Conrad of his sentence blame,
His foe, if vanquish'd, had but shared the same:—
Alone he sate—in solitude—and scann'd
His guilty bosom, but that breast he mann'd:
One thought alone he could not—dared not meet—
"Oh, how these tidings will Medora greet?"
Then—only then—his clanking hands he raised,
And strain'd with rage the chain on which he gazed;
But soon he found—or feign'd—or dream'd relief,
And smiled in self-derision of his grief.
"And now come torture when it will—or may,
More need of rest to nerve me for the day!"
This said, with languor to his mat he crept,
And, whatsoe'er his visions, quickly slept.
'Twas hardly midnight when that fray begun,
For Conrad's plans matured, at once were done:
And Havoc loathes so much the waste of time,
She scarce had left an uncommitted crime.
One hour beheld him since the tide he stemm'd—
Disguised—discover'd—conquering—ta'en—condemn'd—
A chief on land—an outlaw on the deep—
Destroying—saving—prison'd—and asleep!

XII.

He slept in calmest seeming—for his breath
Was hush'd so deep—Ah! happy if in death!
He slept—Who o'er his placid slumber bends?
His foes are gone—and here he hath no friends;
Is it some seraph sent to grant him grace?
No, 'tis an earthly form with heavenly face!
Its white arm raised a lamp—yet gently hid,
Lest the ray flash abruptly on the lid
Of that closed eye, which opens but to pain,
And once unclosed—but once may close again.
That form with eye so dark, and cheek so fair,
And auburn waves of gemm'd and braided hair;
With shape of fairy lightness—naked foot,
That shines like snow, and falls on earth as mute—
Through guards and dunnest night how came it there?
Ah! rather ask what will not woman dare?
Whom youth and pity lead like thee, Gulnare!
She could not sleep—and while the Pacha's rest
In muttering dreams yet saw his pirate-guest,
She left his side, his signet-ring she bore,
Which oft in sport adorn'd her hand before—
And with it, scarcely question'd, won her way
Through drowsy guards that must that sign obey.
Worn out with toil, and tired with changing blows,
Their eyes had envied Conrad his repose;

And chill and nodding at the turret door,
They stretch their listless limbs, and watch no more:
Just raised their heads to hail the signet-ring,
Nor ask or what or who the sign may bring.

XIII.

She gazed in wonder, "Can he calmly sleep,
While other eyes his fall or ravage weep?
And mine in restlessness are wandering here—
What sudden spell hath made this man so dear?
True—'tis to him my life, and more, I owe,
And me and mine he spared from worse than woe!
'Tis late to think—but soft—his slumber breaks—
How heavily he sighs!—he starts—awakes!"

He raised his head—and dazzled with the light,
His eye seem'd dubious if it saw aright:
He moved his hand—the grating of his chain
Too harshly told him that he lived again.
"What is that form? if not a shape of air,
Methinks my jailer's face shows wondrous fair!"

"Pirate! thou know'st me not—but I am one,
Grateful for deeds thou hast too rarely done;
Look on me—and remember her thy hand
Snatch'd from the flames, and thy more fearful band.
I come through darkness—and I scarce know why—
Yet not to hurt—I would not see thee die."

"If so, kind lady! thine the only eye
That would not here in that gay hope delight:
Theirs is the chance—and let them use their right.
But still I thank their courtesy or thine,
That would confess me at so fair a shrine!"

Strange though it seem—yet with extremest grief
Is link'd a mirth—it doth not bring relief—
That playfulness of Sorrow ne'er beguiles,
And smiles in bitterness—but still it smiles;
And sometimes with the wisest and the best,
Till even the scaffold* echoes with their jest!
Yet not the joy to which it seems akin—
It may deceive all hearts, save that within.
Whate'er it was that flash'd on Conrad, now
A laughing wildness half unbent his brow:
And these his accents had a sound of mirth,
As if the last he could enjoy on earth;
Yet 'gainst his nature—for through that short life,
Few thoughts had he to spare from gloom and strife.

* In Sir Thomas More, for instance, on the scaffold, and Anne Boleyn in the Tower, when, grasping her neck, she remarked, that it "was too slender to trouble the headsman much." During one part of the French Revolution, it became a fashion to leave some "mot" as a legacy; and the quantity of facetious last words spoken during that period would form a melancholy jest-book of considerable size.

XIV.

"Corsair! thy doom is named—but I have power
To soothe the Pacha in his weaker hour.
Thee would I spare—nay more—would save thee now,
But this—time—hope—nor even thy strength allow;
But all I can I will: at least delay
The sentence that remits thee scarce a day.
More now were ruin—even thyself were loth
The vain attempt should bring but doom to both."

"Yes!—loth indeed:—my soul is nerved to all,
Or fall'n too low to fear a further fall:
Tempt not thyself with peril; me with hope
Of flight from foes with whom I could not cope:
Unfit to vanquish—shall I meanly fly,
The one of all my band that would not die?
Yet there is one—to whom my memory clings,
Till to these eyes her own wild softness springs.
My sole resources in the path I trod
Were these—my bark—my sword—my love—my God!
The last I left in youth—He leaves me now—
And Man but works His will to lay me low.
I have no thought to mock His throne with prayer
Wrung from the coward crouching of despair;
It is enough—I breathe—and I can bear.
My sword is shaken from the worthless hand
That might have better kept so true a brand;
My bark is sunk or captive—but my love—
For her in sooth my voice would mount above:
Oh! she is all that still to earth can bind—
And this will break a heart so more than kind,
And blight a form—till thine appear'd, Gulnare!
Mine eye ne'er ask'd if others were so fair."

"Thou lov'st another then?—but what to me
Is this—'tis nothing—nothing e'er can be:
But yet—thou lov'st—and—oh! I envy those
Whose hearts on hearts as faithful can repose,
Who never feel the void—the wandering thought
That sighs o'er visions—such as mine hath wrought."

"Lady—methought thy love was his, for whom
This arm redeem'd thee from a fiery tomb."

"My love stern Seyd's! Oh—no—no—not my love—
Yet much this heart, that strives no more, once strove
To meet his passion—but it would not be.
I felt—I feel—love dwells with—with the free.
I am a slave, a favor'd slave at best,
To share his splendor, and seem very blest!
Oft must my soul the question undergo,
Of—'Dost thou love?' and burn to answer, 'No!'
Oh! hard it is that fondness to sustain,
And struggle not to feel averse in vain;
But harder still the heart's recoil to bear,
And hide from one—perhaps another there.

He takes the hand I give not—nor withhold—
Its pulse nor check'd—nor quicken'd—calmly cold,
And when resign'd, it drops a lifeless weight
From one I never loved enough to hate.
No warmth these lips return by his imprest,
And chill'd remembrance shudders o'er the rest.
Yes—had I ever proved that passion's zeal,
The change to hatred were at least to feel:
But still—he goes unmourn'd—returns unsought—
And oft when present—absent from my thought.
Or when reflection comes, and come it must—
I fear that henceforth 'twill but bring disgust;
I am his slave—but, in despite of pride,
'Twere worse than bondage to become his bride.
Oh that this dotage of his breast would cease!
Or seek another and give mine release,
But yesterday—I could have said, to peace!
Yes—if unwonted fondness now I feign,
Remember—captive! 'tis to break thy chain;
Repay the life that to thy hand I owe;
To give thee back to all endear'd below,
Who share such love as I can never know.
Farewell—morn breaks—and I must now away:
'Twill cost me dear—but dread no death to-day!"

XV.

She press'd his fetter'd fingers to her heart,
And bow'd her head, and turn'd her to depart,
And noiseless as a lovely dream is gone.
And was she here? and is he now alone?
What gem hath dropp'd and sparkles o'er his chain?
The tear most sacred, shed for others' pain,
That starts at once—bright—pure—from Pity's mine,
Already polish'd by the hand divine!

Oh! too convincing—dangerously dear—
In woman's eye the unanswerable tear!
That weapon of her weakness she can wield,
To save, subdue—at once her spear and shield:
Avoid it—Virtue ebbs and Wisdom errs,
Too fondly gazing on that grief of hers!
What lost a world, and bade a hero fly?
The timid tear in Cleopatra's eye.
Yet be the soft triumvir's fault forgiven;
By this—how many lose not earth—but heaven!
Consign their souls to man's eternal foe,
And seal their own to spare some wanton's woe.

XVI.

'Tis morn—and o'er his alter'd features play
The beams—without the hope of yesterday.
What shall he be ere night? perchance a thing
O'er which the raven flaps her funeral wing:
By his closed eye unheeded and unfelt,
While sets that sun, and dews of evening melt,
Chill—wet—and misty round each stiffen'd limb,
Refreshing earth—reviving all but him!—

CANTO THE THIRD.

"Come vedi—ancor non m'abbandona."—DANTE.

I.

SLOW sinks, more lovely ere his race be run,
Along Morea's hills the setting sun:
Not, as in northern climes, obscurely bright,
But one unclouded blaze of living light!
O'er the hush'd deep the yellow beam he throws,
Gilds the green wave, that trembles as it glows.
On old Ægina's rock, and Idra's isle,
The god of gladness sheds his parting smile;
O'er his own regions lingering, loves to shine,
Though there his altars are no more divine.
Descending fast the mountain shadows kiss
Thy glorious gulf, unconquer'd Salamis!
Their azure arches through the long expanse
More deeply purpled meet his mellowing glance,
And tenderest tints, along their summits driven,
Mark his gay course, and own the hues of heaven;
Till, darkly shaded from the land and deep,
Behind his Delphian cliff he sinks to sleep.

On such an eve, his palest beam he cast,
When—Athens! here thy Wisest look'd his last.
How watch'd thy better sons his farewell ray,
That closed their murder'd sage's * latest day!
Not yet—not yet—Sol pauses on the hill—
The precious hour of parting lingers still!
But sad his light to agonizing eyes,
And dark the mountain's once delightful dyes:
Gloom o'er the lovely land he seem'd to pour,
The land, where Phœbus never frown'd before;
But ere he sank below Cithæron's head,
The cup of woe was quaff'd—the spirit fled;
The soul of him who scorn'd to fear or fly—
Who lived and died, as none can live or die:
But lo! from high Hymettus to the plain,
The queen of night asserts her silent reign.†
No murky vapor, herald of the storm,
Hides her fair face, nor girds her glowing form;
With cornice glimmering as the moonbeams play,
There the white column greets her grateful ray,
And, bright around with quivering beams beset,
Her emblem sparkles o'er the minaret:
The groves of olive scatter'd dark and wide
Where meek Cephisus pours his scanty tide,
The cypress saddening by the sacred mosque,
The gleaming turret of the gay kiosk, ‡

* Socrates drank the hemlock a short time before sunset, (the hour of execution,) notwithstanding the entreaties of his disciples to wait till the sun went down.

† The twilight in Greece is much shorter than in our own country; the days in winter are longer, but in summer of shorter duration.

‡ The kiosk is a Turkish summer-house; the palm is without the present walls

And, dun and sombre 'mid the holy calm,
Near Theseus' fane yon solitary palm,
All tinged with varied hues, arrest the eye—
And dull were his that pass'd them heedless by.

Again the Ægean, heard no more afar,
Lulls his chafed breast from elemental war;
Again his waves in milder tints unfold
Their long array of sapphire and of gold,
Mix'd with the shades of many a distant isle,
That frown—where gentler ocean seems to smile.*

II.

Not now my theme—why turn my thoughts to thee?
Oh! who can look along thy native sea,
Nor dwell upon thy name, whate'er the tale,
So much its magic must o'er all prevail?
Who that beheld that Sun upon thee set,
Fair Athens! could thine evening face forget?
Not he—whose heart nor time nor distance frees,
Spellbound within the clustering Cyclades!
Nor seems this homage foreign to his strain,
His Corsair's isle was once thine own domain—
Would that with freedom it were thine again!

III.

The Sun hath sunk—and, darker than the night,
Sinks with its beam upon the beacon height—
Medora's heart—the third day 's come and gone—
With it he comes not—sends not—faithless one!
The wind was fair though light; and storms were none.
Last eve Anselmo's bark return'd, and yet
His only tidings that they had not met!
Though wild, as now, far different were the tale
Had Conrad waited for that single sail.

The night-breeze freshens—she that day had pass'd
In watching all that Hope proclaim'd a mast;
Sadly she sate—on high—Impatience bore
At last her footsteps to the midnight shore,
And there she wander'd, heedless of the spray
That dash'd her garments oft, and warn'd away:
She saw not—felt not this—nor dared depart,
Nor deem'd it cold—her chill was at her heart;
Till grew such certainty from that suspense—
His very sight had shock'd from life or sense!

It came at last—a sad and shatter'd boat,
Whose inmates first beheld whom first they sought;

of Athens, not far from the temple of Theseus, between which and the tree the wall intervenes. Cephisus' stream is indeed scanty, and Ilissus has no stream at all.

* The opening lines, as far as section II., have, perhaps, little business here, and were annexed to an unpublished (though printed) poem: but they were written on the spot in the spring of 1811, and—I scarce know why—the reader must excuse their appearance here if he can.

Some bleeding—all most wretched—these the few—
Scarce knew they how escaped—*this* all they knew.
In silence, darkling, each appear'd to wait
His fellow's mournful guess at Conrad's fate:
Something they would have said; but seem'd to fear
To trust their accents to Medora's ear.
She saw at once, yet sank not—trembled not—
Beneath that grief, that loneliness of lot,
Within that meek fair form, where feelings high,
That deem'd not till they found their energy.
While yet was Hope—they soften'd—flutter'd—wept—
All lost—that softness died not—but it slept;
And o'er its slumber rose that Strength which said,
"With nothing left to love—there's nought to dread."
'Tis more than nature's; like the burning might
Delirium gathers from the fever's height.

"Silent you stand—nor would I hear you tell
What—speak not—breathe not—for I know it well—
Yet would I ask—almost my lip denies
The—quick your answer—tell me where he lies."

"Lady! we know not—scarce with life we fled;
But here is one denies that he is dead:
He saw him bound; and bleeding—but alive."

She heard no further—'twas in vain to strive—
So throbb'd each vein—each thought—till then withstood,
Her own dark soul—these words at once subdued:
She totters—falls—and senseless had the wave
Perchance but snatch'd her from another grave;
But that with hands though rude, yet weeping eyes,
They yield such aid as Pity's haste supplies:
Dash o'er her death-like cheek the ocean-dew,
Raise—fan—sustain—till life returns anew;
Awake her handmaids, with the matrons leave
That fainting form o'er which they gaze and grieve;
Then seek Anselmo's cavern, to report
The tale too tedious—when the triumph short.

IV.

In that wild council words wax'd warm and strange,
With thoughts of ransom, rescue, and revenge;
All, save repose or flight: still lingering there
Breathed Conrad's spirit, and forbade despair;
Whate'er his fate—the breasts he form'd and led,
Will save him living, or appease him dead.
Woe to his foes! there yet survive a few,
Whose deeds are daring, as their hearts are true.

V.

Within the Harem's secret chamber sate
Stern Seyd, still pondering o'er his Captive's fate;
His thoughts on love and hate alternate dwell,
Now with Gulnare, and now in Conrad's cell;

Here at his feet the lovely slave reclined
Surveys his brow—would soothe his gloom of mind:
While many an anxious glance her large dark eye
Sends in its idle search for sympathy,
His only bends in seeming o'er his beads,*
But inly views his victim as he bleeds.

"Pacha! the day is thine; and on thy crest
Sits Triumph—Conrad taken—fall'n the rest!
His doom is fix'd—he dies: and well his fate
Was earn'd—yet much too worthless for thy hate:
Methinks, a short release, for ransom told
With all his treasure, not unwisely sold;
Report speaks largely of his pirate-hoard—
Would that of this my Pacha were the lord!
While baffled, weaken'd by this fatal fray—
Watch'd—follow'd—he were then an easier prey;
But once cut off—the remnant of his band
Embark their wealth, and seek a safer strand."

"Gulnare!—if for each drop of blood a gem
Were offer'd rich as Stamboul's diadem;
If for each hair of his a massy mine
Of virgin ore should supplicating shine;
If all our Arab tales divulge or dream
Of wealth were here—that gold should not redeem!
It had not now redeem'd a single hour,
But that I know him fetter'd, in my power;
And, thirsting for revenge, I ponder still
On pangs that longest rack, and latest kill."

"Nay, Seyd!—I seek not to restrain thy rage,
Too justly moved for mercy to assuage;
My thoughts were only to secure for thee
His riches—thus released, he were not free:
Disabled, shorn of half his might and band,
His capture could but wait thy first command."

"His capture *could!*—and shall I then resign
One day to him—the wretch already mine?
Release my foe!—at whose remonstrance?—thine!
Fair suitor!—to thy virtuous gratitude,
That thus repays this Giaour's relenting mood,
Which thee and thine alone of all could spare,
No doubt—regardless if the prize were fair,
My thanks and praise alike are due—now hear!
I have a counsel for thy gentler ear:
I do mistrust thee, woman! and each word
Of thine stamps truth on all Suspicion heard.
Borne in his arms through fire from yon Serai—
Say, wert thou lingering there with him to fly?
Thou need'st not answer—thy confession speaks,
Already reddening on thy guilty cheeks;

* The Comboloio, or Mohammedan rosary. The beads are in number ninety-one.

Then, lovely dame, bethink thee! and beware:
'Tis not *his* life alone may claim such care!
Another word and—nay—I need no more.
Accursed was the moment when he bore
Thee from the flames, which better far—but—no—
I then had mourn'd thee with a lover's woe—
Now, 'tis thy lord that warns—deceitful thing!
Know'st thou that I can clip thy wanton wing?
In words alone I am not wont to chafe:
Look to thyself—nor deem thy falsehood safe!"

He rose—and slowly, sternly thence withdrew,
Rage in his eye, and threats in his adieu:
Ah! little reck'd that chief of womanhood—
Which frowns ne'er quell'd, nor menaces subdued;
And little deem'd he what thy heart, Gulnare!
When soft could feel, and when incensed could dare.
His doubts appear'd to wrong—nor yet she knew
How deep the root from whence compassion grew—
She was a slave—from such may captives claim
A fellow-feeling, differing but in name;
Still half unconscious—heedless of his wrath,
Again she ventured on the dangerous path,
Again his rage repell'd—until arose
That strife of thought—the source of woman's woes!

VI.

Meanwhile—long anxious—weary—still—the same
Roll'd day and night—his soul could never tame—
This fearful interval of doubt and dread,
When every hour might doom him worse than dead,
When every step that echo'd by the gate
Might entering lead where axe and stake await;
When every voice that grated on his ear
Might be the last that he could ever hear;
Could terror tame—that spirit stern and high
Had proved unwilling as unfit to die;
'Twas worn—perhaps decay'd—yet silent bore
That conflict deadlier far than all before:
The heat of fight, the hurry of the gale,
Leave scarce one thought inert enough to quail;
But bound and fix'd in fetter'd solitude,
To pine, the prey of every changing mood;
To gaze on thine own heart; and meditate
Irrevocable faults, and coming fate—
Too late the last to shun—the first to mend—
To count the hours that struggle to thine end,
With not a friend to animate, and tell
To other ears that death became thee well;
Around thee foes to forge the ready lie,
And blot life's latest scene with calumny;
Before thee tortures, which the soul can dare,
Yet doubts how well the shrinking flesh may bear;
But deeply feels a single cry would shame,
To valor's praise thy last and dearest claim;

The life thou leav'st below, denied above
By kind monopolists of heavenly love;
And more than doubtful paradise—thy heaven
Of earthly hope—thy loved one from thee riven.
Such were the thoughts that outlaw must sustain
And govern pangs surpassing mortal pain:
And those sustain'd he—boots it well or ill?
Since not to sink beneath, is something still!

VII.

The first day pass'd—he saw not her—Gulnare—
The second—third—and still she came not there;
But what her words avouch'd, her charms had done,
Or else he had not seen another sun.
The fourth day roll'd along, and with the night
Came storm and darkness in their mingling might:
Oh! how he listen'd to the rushing deep,
That ne'er till now so broke upon his sleep;
And his wild spirit wilder wishes sent,
Roused by the roar of his own element!
Oft had he ridden on that winged wave,
And loved its roughness for the speed it gave;
And now its dashing echo'd on his ear,
A long known voice—alas! too vainly near!
Loud sung the wind above; and, doubly loud,
Shook o'er his turret-cell the thunder-cloud;
And flash'd the lightning by the latticed bar,
To him more genial than the midnight star:
Close to the glimmering grate he dragg'd his chain,
And hoped *that* peril might not prove in vain.
He raised his iron hand to Heaven, and pray'd
One pitying flash to mar the form it made:
His steel and impious prayer attract alike—
The storm roll'd onward, and disdain'd to strike;
Its peal wax'd fainter—ceased—he felt alone,
As if some faithless friend had spurn'd his groan!

VIII.

The midnight pass'd—and to the massy door
A light step came—it paused—it moved once more;
Slow turns the grating bolt and sullen key:
'Tis as his heart foreboded—that fair She!
Whate'er her sins, to him a guardian saint,
And beauteous still as hermit's hope can paint;
Yet changed since last within that cell she came,
More pale her cheek, more tremulous her frame:
On him she cast her dark and hurried eye,
Which spoke before her accents—"Thou must die!
Yes, thou must die—there is but one resource,
The last—the worst—if torture were not worse."

"Lady! I look to none—my lips proclaim
What last proclaim'd they—Conrad still the same:
Why shouldst thou seek an outlaw's life to spare,
And change the sentence I deserve to bear?
Well have I earn'd—nor here alone—the meed
Of Seyd's revenge, by many a lawless deed."

"Why should I seek? because—oh! did'st thou not
Redeem my life from worse than slavery's lot?
Why should I seek?—hath misery made thee blind
To the fond workings of a woman's mind!
And must I say? albeit my heart rebel
With all that woman feels, but should not tell—
Because—despite thy crimes—that heart is moved:
It fear'd thee—thank'd thee—pitied—madden'd—loved.
Reply not, tell not now thy tale again,
Thou lov'st another—and I love in vain;
Though fond as mine her bosom, form more fair,
I rush through peril which she would not dare.
If that thy heart to hers were truly dear,
Were I thine own—thou wert not lonely here:
An outlaw's spouse—and leave her lord to roam!
What hath such gentle dame to do with home?
But speak not now—o'er thine and o'er my head
Hangs the keen sabre by a single thread;
If thou hast courage still, and would be free,
Receive this poniard—rise—and follow me!"

"Ay—in my chains! my steps will gently tread,
With these adornments, o'er each slumbering head!
Thou hast forgot—is this a garb for flight?
Or is that instrument more fit for fight?"

"Misdoubting Corsair! I have gain'd the guard,
Ripe for revolt, and greedy for reward.
A single word of mine removes that chain:
Without some aid how here could I remain?
Well, since we met, hath sped my busy time,
If in aught evil, for thy sake the crime:
The crime—'tis none to punish those of Seyd,
That hated tyrant, Conrad—he must bleed!
I see thee shudder—but my soul is changed—
Wrong'd, spurn'd, reviled—and it shall be avenged—
Accused of what till now my heart disdain'd—
Too faithful, though to bitter bondage chain'd.
Yes, smile!—but he had little cause to sneer,
I was not treacherous then—nor thou too dear:
But he has said it—and the jealous well,
Those tyrants, teasing, tempting to rebel,
Deserve the fate their fretting lips foretell.
I never loved—he bought me—somewhat high—
Since with me came a heart he could not buy.
I was a slave unmurmuring: he hath said,
But for his rescue I with thee had fled.
'Twas false thou know'st—but let such augurs rue,
Their words are omens Insult renders true.
Nor was thy respite granted to my prayer;
This fleeting grace was only to prepare
New torments for thy life, and my despair.
Mine too he threatens; but his dotage still
Would fain reserve me for his lordly will;
When wearier of these fleeting charms and me,
There yawns the sack—and yonder rolls the sea,

What, am I then a toy for dotard's play,
To wear but till the gilding frets away?
I saw thee—loved thee—owe thee all—would save,
If but to show how grateful is a slave.
But had he not thus menaced fame and life,
(And well he keeps his oaths pronounced in strife,)
I still had saved thee—but the Pacha spared.
Now I am all thine own—for all prepared:
Thou lov'st me not—nor know'st—or but the worst.
Alas! this love—that hatred are the first—
Oh! couldst thou prove my truth, thou wouldst not start,
Nor fear the fire that lights an Eastern heart;
'Tis now the beacon of thy safety—now
It points within the port a Mainote prow:
But in one chamber, where our path must lead,
There sleeps—he must not wake—the oppressor Seyd!"

"Gulnare—Gulnare—I never felt till now
My abject fortune, wither'd fame so low:
Seyd is mine enemy: had swept my band
From earth with ruthless but with open hand,
And therefore came I, in my bark of war,
To smite the smiter with the scimitar;
Such is my weapon—not the secret knife—
Who spares a woman's seeks not slumber's life.
Thine saved I gladly, Lady, not for this—
Let me not deem that mercy shown amiss.
Now fare thee well—more peace be with thy breast!
Night wears apace—my last of earthly rest!"

"Rest! rest! by sunrise must thy sinews shake,
And thy limbs writhe around the ready stake.
I heard the order—saw—I will not see—
If thou wilt perish, I will fall with thee.
My life—my love—my hatred—all below
Are on this cast—Corsair! 'tis but a blow!
Without it flight were idle—how evade
His sure pursuit? my wrongs too unrepaid,
My youth disgraced—the long, long wasted years,
One blow shall cancel with our future fears;
But since the dagger suits thee less than brand,
I'll try the firmness of a female hand.
The guards are gain'd—one moment all were o'er—
Corsair! we meet in safety or no more;
If errs my feeble hand, the morning cloud
Will hover o'er thy scaffold, and my shroud."

IX.

She turn'd, and vanish'd ere he could reply,
But his glance follow'd far with eager eye;
And gathering, as he could, the links that bound
His form, to curl their length, and curb their sound,
Since bar and bolt no more his steps preclude,
He, fast as fetter'd limbs allow, pursued.
'Twas dark and winding, and he knew not where
That passage led; nor lamp nor guard were there:

He sees a dusky glimmering—shall he seek
Or shun that ray so indistinct and weak?
Chance guides his steps—a freshness seems to bear
Full on his brow, as if from morning air—
He reach'd an open gallery—on his eye
Gleam'd the last star of night, the clearing sky:
Yet scarcely heeded these—another light
From a lone chamber struck upon his sight.
Towards it he moved; a scarcely closing door
Reveal'd the ray within, but nothing more.
With hasty step a figure outward pass'd,
Then paused—and turn'd—and paused—'tis She at last!
No poniard in that hand—nor sign of ill—
"Thanks to that softening heart—she could not kill!"
Again he look'd, the wildness of her eye
Starts from the day abrupt and fearfully.
She stopp'd—threw back her dark far-floating hair,
That nearly veil'd her face and bosom fair:
As if she late had bent her leaning head
Above some object of her doubt or dread.
They meet—upon her brow—unknown—forgot—
Her hurrying hand had left—'twas but a spot—
Its hue was all he saw, and scarce withstood—
Oh! slight but certain pledge of crime—'tis blood!

X.

He had seen battle—he had brooded lone
O'er promised pangs to sentenced guilt foreshown;
He had been tempted—chasten'd—and the chain
Yet on his arms might ever there remain:
But ne'er from strife—captivity—remorse—
From all his feelings in their inmost force—
So thrill'd—so shudder'd every creeping vein,
As now they froze before that purple stain.
That spot of blood, that light but guilty streak,
Had banish'd all the beauty from her cheek!
Blood he had view'd—could view unmoved—but then
It flow'd in combat, or was shed by men!

XI.

"'Tis done—he nearly waked—but it is done.
Corsair! he perish'd—thou art dearly won.
All words would now be vain—away—away!
Our bark is tossing—'tis already day.
The few gain'd over, now are wholly mine,
And these thy yet surviving band shall join:
Anon my voice shall vindicate my hand,
When once our sail forsakes this hated strand."

XII.

She clapp'd her hands—and through the gallery pour,
Equipp'd for flight, her vassals—Greek and Moor;
Silent but quick they stoop, his chains unbind;
Once more his limbs are free as mountain wind!
But on his heavy heart such sadness sate,
As if they there transferr'd that iron weight.

No words are utter'd—at her sign, a door
Reveals the secret passage to the shore;
The city lies behind—they speed, they reach
The glad waves dancing on the yellow beach;
And Conrad following, at her beck, obey'd,
Nor cared he now if rescued or betray'd;
Resistance was as useless as if Seyd
Yet lived to view the doom his ire decreed.

XIII.

Embark'd, the sail unfurl'd, the light breeze blew—
How much had Conrad's memory to review!
Sunk he in Contemplation, till the cape
Where last he anchor'd rear'd its giant shape.
Ah!—since that fatal night, though brief the time,
Had swept an age of terror, grief, and crime.
As its far shadow frown'd above the mast,
He veil'd his face, and sorrow'd as he pass'd:
He thought of all—Gonsalvo and his band,
His fleeting triumph and his failing hand;
He thought on her afar, his lonely bride:
He turn'd and saw—Gulnare, the homicide!

XIV.

She watch'd his features till she could not bear
Their freezing aspect and averted air,
And that strange fierceness foreign to her eye,
Fell quench'd in tears, too late to shed or dry.
She knelt beside him and his hand she press'd,
"Thou may'st forgive though Allah's self detest;
But for that deed of darkness what wert thou?
Reproach me—but not yet—Oh! spare me *now!*
I am not what I seem—this fearful night
My brain bewilder'd—do not madden quite!
If I had never loved—though less my guilt,
Thou hadst not lived to—hate me—if thou wilt."

XV.

She wrongs his thoughts, they more himself upbraid
Than her, though undesign'd, the wretch he made;
But speechless all, deep, dark, and unexprest,
They bleed within that silent cell—his breast.
Still onward, fair the breeze, nor rough the surge,
The blue waves sport around the stern they urge;
Far on the horizon's verge appears a speck,
A spot—a mast—a sail—an armed deck!
Their little bark her men of watch descry,
And ampler canvas woos the wind from high;
She bears her down majestically near,
Speed on her prow, and terror in her tier;
A flash is seen—the ball beyond their bow
Booms harmless, hissing to the deep below.
Up rose keen Conrad from his silent trance,
A long, long absent gladness in his glance:
"'Tis mine—my blood-red flag! again—again—
I am not all deserted on the main!"

They own the signal, answer to the hail.
Hoist out the boat at once, and slacken sail.
"'Tis Conrad! Conrad!" shouting from the deck,
Command nor duty could their transport check!
With light alacrity and gaze of pride,
They view him mount once more his vessel's side;
A smile relaxing in each rugged face,
Their arms can scarce forbear a rough embrace.
He, half forgetting danger and defeat,
Returns their greeting as a chief may greet,
Wrings with a cordial grasp Anselmo's hand,
And feels he yet can conquer and command!

XVI.

These greetings o'er, the feelings that o'erflow,
Yet grieve to win him back without a blow;
They sail'd prepared for vengeance—had they known
A woman's hand secured that deed her own,
She were their queen—less scrupulous are they
Than haughty Conrad how they win their way.
With many an asking smile, and wondering stare,
They whisper round, and gaze upon Gulnare;
And her, at once above—beneath her sex,
Whom blood appall'd not, their regards perplex.
To Conrad turns her fa r imploring eye,
She drops her veil, and stands in silence by;
Her arms are meekly folded on that breast,
Which—Conrad safe—to fate resign'd the rest.
Though worse than frenzy could that bosom fill,
Extreme in love or hate, in good or ill,
The worst of crimes had left her woman still!

XVII.

This Conrad mark'd, and felt—ah! could he less?—
Hate of that deed—but grief for her distress;
What she has done no tears can wash away,
And Heaven must punish on its angry day:
But—it was done: he knew, whate'er her guilt,
For him that poniard smote, that blood was spilt;
And he was free!—and she for him had given
Her all on earth, and more than all in heaven!
And now he turn'd him to that dark-eyed slave,
Whose brow was bow'd beneath the glance he gave,
Who now seem'd changed and humbled:—faint and meek,
But varying oft the color of her cheek
To deeper shades of paleness—all its red
That fearful spot which stain'd it from the dead!
He took that hand—it trembled—now too late—
So soft in love—so wildly nerved in hate;
He clasp'd that hand—it trembled—and his own
Had lost its firmness, and his voice its tone.
"Gulnare!"—but she replied not—"dear Gulnare!"
She raised her eye—her only answer there—
At once she sought and sunk in his embrace:
If he had driven her from that resting-place

His had been more or less than mortal heart,
But—good or ill—it bade her not depart.
Perchance, but for the bodings of his breast,
His latest virtue then had join'd the rest.
Yet even Medora might forgive the kiss
That ask'd from form so fair no more than this,
The first, the last that Frailty stole from Faith—
To lips where Love had lavish'd all his breath,
To lips—whose broken sighs such fragrance fling
As he had fann'd them freshly with his wing!

XVIII.

They gain by twilight's hour their lonely isle.
To them the very rocks appear to smile;
The haven hums with many a cheering sound,
The beacons blaze their wonted stations round,
The boats are darting o'er the curly bay,
And sportive dolphins bend them through the spray;
Even the hoarse sea-bird's shrill, discordant shriek
Greets like the welcome of his tuneless beak!
Beneath each lamp that through its lattice gleams,
Their fancy paints the friends that trim the beams.
Oh! what can sanctify the joys of home,
Like Hope's gay glance from Ocean's troubled foam!

XIX.

The lights are high on beacon and from bower,
And 'midst them Conrad seeks Medora's tower:
He looks in vain—'tis strange—and all remark,
Amid so many, hers alone is dark.
'Tis strange—of yore its welcome never fail'd,
Nor now, perchance extinguish'd, only veil'd.
With the first boat descends he to the shore,
And looks impatient on the lingering oar.
Oh for a wing beyond the falcon's flight,
To bear him like an arrow to that height!
With the first pause the resting rowers gave,
He waits not—looks not—leaps into the wave,
Strives through the surge, bestrides the beach, and high
Ascends the path familiar to his eye.

He reach'd his turret-door—he paused—no sound
Broke from within; and all was night around.
He knock'd, and loudly—footstep nor reply
Announced that any heard or deem'd him nigh;
He knock'd—but faintly—for his trembling hand
Refused to aid his heavy heart's demand.
The portal opens—'tis a well-known face—
But not the form he panted to embrace.
Its lips are silent—twice his own essay'd,
And fail'd to frame the question they delay'd;
He snatch'd the lamp—its light will answer all—
It quits his grasp, expiring in the fall.
He would not wait for that reviving ray—
As soon could he have linger'd there for day;

But, glimmering through the dusky corridor,
Another chequers o'er the shadow'd floor;
His steps the chamber gain—his eyes behold
All that his heart believed not—yet foretold!

XX.

He turn'd not—spoke not—sunk not—fix'd his look,
And set the anxious frame that lately shook:
He gazed—how long we gaze despite of pain,
And know, but dare not own, we gaze in vain!
In life itself she was so still and fair,
That death with gentler aspect wither'd there;
And the cold flowers her colder hand contain'd,*
In that last grasp as tenderly were strain'd
As if she scarcely felt, but feign'd a sleep,
And made it almost mockery yet to weep:
The long dark lashes fringed her lids of snow,
And veil'd—thought shrinks from all that lurk'd below—
Oh! o'er the eye death most exerts his might,
And hurls the spirit from her throne of light!
Sinks those blue orbs in that long last eclipse,
But spares, as yet, the charm around her lips—
Yet, yet they seem as they forbore to smile,
And wish'd repose—but only for a while;
But the white shroud, and each extended tress,
Long—fair—but spread in utter lifelessness,
Which, late the sport of every summer wind,
Escaped the baffled wreath that strove to bind;
These—and the pale pure cheek, became the bier—
But she is nothing—wherefore is he here?

XXI.

He ask'd no question—all were answer'd now
By the first glance on that still—marble brow.
It was enough—she died—what reck'd it how?
The love of youth, the hope of better years,
The source of softest wishes, tenderest fears,
The only living thing he could not hate,
Was reft at once—and he deserved his fate,
But did not feel it less;—the good explore,
For peace, those realms where guilt can never soar:
The proud—the wayward—who have fix'd below
Their joy, and find this earth enough for woe,
Lose in that one their all—perchance a mite—
But who in patience parts with all delight?
Full many a stoic eye and aspect stern
Mask hearts where grief hath little left to learn;
And many a withering thought lies hid, not lost,
In smiles that least befit who wear them most.

XXII.

By those, that deepest feel, is ill exprest
The indistinctness of the suffering breast;

* In the Levant it is the custom to strew flowers on the bodies of the dead, and in the hands of young persons to place a nosegay.

Where thousand thoughts begin to end in one,
Which seeks from all the refuge found in none;
No words suffice the secret soul to show,
For Truth denies all eloquence to Woe.
On Conrad's stricken soul exhaustion prest,
And stupor almost lull'd it into rest;
So feeble now—his mother's softness crept
To those wild eyes, which like an infant's wept:
It was the very weakness of his brain,
Which thus confess'd without relieving pain.
None saw his trickling tears—perchance, if seen,
That useless flood of grief had never been:
Nor long they flow'd—he dried them to depart
In helpless—hopeless—brokenness of heart:
The sun goes forth—but Conrad's day is dim;
And the night cometh—ne'er to pass from him.
There is no darkness like the cloud of mind,
On Grief's vain eye—the blindest of the blind!
Which may not—dare not see—but turns aside
To blackest shade—nor will endure a guide!

XXIII.

His heart was form'd for softness—warp'd to wrong;
Betray'd too early, and beguiled too long;
Each feeling pure—as falls the dropping dew
Within the grot; like that had harden'd too;
Less clear, perchance, its earthly trials pass'd,
But sunk, and chill'd, and petrified at last.
Yet tempests wear, and lightning cleaves the rock;
If such his heart, so shatter'd it the shock.
There grew one flower beneath its rugged brow,
Though dark the shade—it shelter'd—saved till now.
The thunder came—that bolt hath blasted both,
The Granite's firmness, and the Lily's growth:
The gentle plant hath left no leaf to tell
Its tale, but shrunk and wither'd where it fell;
And of its cold protector, blacken round
But shiver'd fragments on the barren ground!

XXIV.

'Tis morn—to venture on his lonely hour
Few dare; though now Anselmo sought his tower.
He was not there—nor seen along the shore;
Ere night, alarm'd, their isle is traversed o'er:
Another morn—another bids them seek,
And shout his name till echo waxeth weak;
Mount—grotto—cavern—valley search'd in vain,
They find on shore a sea-boat's broken chain:
Their hope revives—they follow o'er the main.
'Tis idle all—moons roll on moons away,
And Conrad comes not—came not since that day:
Nor trace, nor tidings of his doom declare
Where lives his grief, or perish'd his despair!
Long mourn'd his band whom none could mourn beside;
And fair the monument they gave his bride:

For him they raise not the recording stone—
His death yet dubious, deeds too widely known;
He left a Corsair's name to other times,
Link'd with one virtue, and a thousand crimes.*

* That the point of honor which is represented in one instance of Conrad's character has not been carried beyond the bounds of probability, may perhaps be in some degree confirmed by the following anecdote of a brother buccaneer in the year 1814:—

"Our readers have all seen the account of the enterprise against the pirates of Barrataria; but few, we believe, were informed of the situation, history, or nature of that establishment. For the information of such as were unacquainted with it, we have procured from a friend the following interesting narrative of the main facts, of which he has personal knowledge, and which cannot fail to interest our readers:

"Barrataria is a bay, or a narrow arm of the Gulf of Mexico: it runs through a rich but very flat country, until it reaches within a mile of the Mississippi river, fifteen miles below the city of New Orleans. The bay has branches almost innumerable, in which persons can lie concealed from the severest scrutiny. It communicates with three lakes which lie on the south-west side, and these with the lake of the same name, and which lies contiguous to the sea, where there is an island formed by the two arms of this lake and the sea. The east and west points of this island were fortified in the year 1811 by a band of pirates, under the command of one Monsieur La Fitte. A large majority of these outlaws are of that class of the population of the state of Louisiana who fled from the island of St. Domingo during the troubles there, and took refuge in the island of Cuba; and when the last war between France and Spain commenced, they were compelled to leave that island with the short notice of a few days. Without ceremony, they entered the United States, the most of them the state of Louisiana, with all the negroes they had possessed in Cuba. They were notified by the governor of that state of the clause in the Constitution which forbade the importation of slaves; but, at the same time, received the assurance of the governor that he would obtain, if possible, the approbation of the general government for their retaining this property.

"The island of Barrataria is situated about lat. 29 deg. 15 min., long. 92 deg. 30 min., and is as remarkable for its health as for the superior scale and shell fish with which its waters abound. The chief of this horde, like Charles de Moor, had mixed with his many vices some virtues. In the year 1813, this party had, from its turpitude and boldness, claimed the attention of the governor of Louisiana; and, to break up the establishment, he thought proper to strike at the head. He therefore offered a reward of 500 dollars for the head of Monsieur La Fitte, who was well known to the inhabitants of the city of New Orleans, from his immediate connection, and his once having been a fencing-master in the city, of great reputation, which art he learned in Buonaparte's army, where he was a captain. The reward which was offered by the governor for the head of La Fitte was answered by the offer of a reward from the latter of 15,000 dollars for the head of the governor. The governor ordered out a company to march from the city to La Fitte's island, and to burn and destroy all the property, and to bring to the city of New Orleans all his banditti. This company, under the command of a man who had been the intimate associate of this bold captain, approached very near to the fortified island before he saw a man, or heard a sound, until he heard a whistle, not unlike a boatswain's call. Then it was he found himself surrounded by armed men, who had emerged from the secret avenues which led into Bayou. Here it was that the modern Charles de Moor developed his few noble traits: for to this man, who had come to destroy his life and all that was dear to him, he not only spared his life, but offered him that which would have made the honest soldier easy for the remainder of his days, which was indignantly refused. He then, with the approbation of his captor, returned to the city. This circumstance, and some concomitant events, proved that this band of pirates was not to be taken by land. Our naval force having always been small in that quarter, exertions for the destruction of this illicit establishment could not be expected from them until augmented; for an officer of the navy, with most of the gunboats on that station, had to retreat from an overwhelming force of La Fitte's. So soon as the augmentation of the navy authorized an attack, one was made; and, now this almost invulnerable point and key to New Orleans is clear of an enemy, it is to be hoped the government will hold it by a strong military force." — *From an American Newspaper.*

In Noble's continuation of "Granger's Biographical Dictionary," there is a singular passage in his account of Archbishop Blackbourne; and as in some

measure connected with the profession of the hero of the foregoing poem, I cannot resist the temptation of extracting it :—

"There is something mysterious in the history and character of Dr. Blackbourne. The former is but imperfectly known; and report has even asserted he was a buccaneer; and that one of his brethren in that profession having asked, on his arrival in England, what had become of his old chum Blackbourne, was answered, he is Archbishop of York. We are informed that Blackbourne was installed sub-dean of Exeter in 1694, which office he resigned in 1702; but after his successor Lewis Barnet's death, in 1704, he regained it. In the following year he became dean; and, in 1714, held with it the archdeanery of Cornwall. He was consecrated Bishop of Exeter, February 24, 1716; and translated to York, November 28, 1724, as a reward, according to court scandal, for uniting George I. to the Duchess of Munster. This, however, appears to have been an unfounded calumny. As archbishop he behaved with great prudence, and was equally respectable as the guardian of the revenues of the see. Rumor whispered he retained the vices of his youth, and that a passion for the fair sex formed an item in the list of his weaknesses; but so far from being convicted by seventy witnesses, he does not appear to have been directly criminated by one. In short, I look upon these aspersions as the effects of mere malice. How is it possible a buccaneer should have been so good a scholar as Blackbourne certainly was? He who had so perfect a knowledge of the classics, (particularly of the Greek tragedians,) as to be able to read them with the same ease as he could Shakspeare, must have taken great pains to acquire the learned languages, and have had both leisure and good masters. But he was undoubtedly educated at Christ Church College, Oxford. He is allowed to have been a pleasant man; this, however, was turned against him, by its being said, 'he gained more hearts than souls.'"

"The only voice that could soothe the passions of the savage (Alphonso III.) was that of an amiable and virtuous wife, the sole object of his love; the voice of Donna Isabella, the daughter of the Duke of Savoy, and the grand-daughter of Philip II., king of Spain. Her dying words sunk deep into his memory; his fierce spirit melted into tears; and after the last embrace, Alphonso retired into his chamber to bewail his irreparable loss, and to meditate on the vanity of human life."—*Miscellaneous Works of Gibbon*, new edit., 8vo. vol. iii. p. 473.

LARA.*

CANTO THE FIRST.

I.

The Serfs are glad through Lara's wide domain,†
And slavery half forgets her feudal chain;
He, their unhoped, but unforgotten lord—
The long self-exiled chieftain is restored:
There be bright faces in the busy hall,
Bowls on the board, and banners on the wall;
Far chequering o'er the pictured window, plays
The unwonted fagots' hospitable blaze;
And gay retainers gather round the hearth,
With tongues all loudness, and with eyes all mirth.

II.

The chief of Lara is return'd again:
And why had Lara cross'd the bounding main?
Left by his sire, too young such loss to know,
Lord of himself;—that heritage of woe,
That fearful empire which the human breast
But holds to rob the heart within of rest!—
With none to check, and few to point in time
The thousand paths that slope the way to crime;
Then, when he most required commandment, then
Had Lara's daring boyhood govern'd men.
It skills not, boots not, step by step to trace
His youth through all the mazes of its race;
Short was the course his restlessness had run,
But long enough to leave him half undone.

III.

And Lara left in youth his fatherland;
But from the hour he waved his parting hand

* The reader of "Lara" may probably regard it as a sequel to a poem that recently appeared:* whether the cast of the hero's character, the turn of his adventures, and the general outline and coloring of the story, may not encourage such a supposition, shall be left to his determination.

† The reader is advertised that the name only of Lara being Spanish, and no circumstance of local or national description fixing the scene or hero of the poem to any country or age, the word "Serf," which could not be correctly applied to the lower classes in Spain, who were never vassals of the soil, has nevertheless been employed to designate the followers of our fictitious chieftain.

Each trace wax'd fainter of his course, till all
Had nearly ceased his memory to recall.
His sire was dust, his vassals could declare,
'Twas all they knew, that Lara was not there;
Nor sent, nor came he, till conjecture grew
Cold in the many, anxious in the few.
His hall scarce echoes with his wonted name,
His portrait darkens in its fading frame,
Another chief consoled his destined bride,
The young forgot him, and the old had died;
"Yet doth he live!" exclaims the impatient heir,
And sighs for sables which he must not wear.
A hundred scutcheons deck with gloomy grace
The Laras' last and longest dwelling-place;
But one is absent from the mouldering file,
That now were welcome to that Gothic pile.

IV.

He comes at last in sudden loneliness,
And whence they know not, why they need not guess;
They more might marvel, when the greeting 's o'er,
Not that he came, but came not long before:
No train is his beyond a single page,
Of foreign aspect and of tender age.
Years had roll'd on, and fast they speed away
To those that wander as to those that stay;
But lack of tidings from another clime
Had lent a flagging wing to weary Time.
They see, they recognize, yet almost deem
The present dubious, or the past a dream.

He lives, nor yet is past his manhood's prime,
Though scar'd by toil, and something touch'd by time;
His faults, whate'er they were, if scarce forgot,
Might be untaught him by his varied lot;
Nor good nor ill of late were known, his name
Might yet uphold his patrimonial fame.
His soul in youth was haughty, but his sins
No more than pleasure from the stripling wins;
And such, if not yet harden'd in their course,
Might be redeem'd, nor ask a long remorse.

V.

And they indeed were changed—'tis quickly seen,
Whate'er he be, 'twas not what he had been:
That brow in furrow'd lines had fix'd at last,
And spake of passions, but of passion past;
The pride, but not the fire, of early days,
Coldness of mien, and carelessness of praise;
A high demeanor, and a glance that took
Their thoughts from others by a single look;
And that sarcastic levity of tongue,
The stinging of a heart the world hath stung,
That darts in seeming playfulness around,
And makes those feel that will not own the wound:
All these seem'd his, and something more beneath
Than glance could well reveal, or accent breathe.

Ambition, glory, love, the common aim
That some can conquer, and that all would claim,
Within his breast appear'd no more to strive,
Yet seem'd as lately they had been alive;
And some deep feeling it were vain to trace
At moments lighten'd o'er his livid face.

VI.

Not much he loved long question of the past,
Nor told of wondrous wilds, and deserts vast,
In those far lands where he had wander'd lone,
And—as himself would have it seem—unknown:
Yet these in vain his eye could scarcely scan,
Nor glean experience from his fellow man;
But what he had beheld he shunn'd to show,
As hardly worth a stranger's care to know;
If still more prying such inquiry grew,
His brow fell darker, and his words more few.

VII.

Not unrejoiced to see him once again,
Warm was his welcome to the haunts of men;
Born of high lineage, link'd in high command,
He mingled with the magnates of his land;
Join'd the carousals of the great and gay,
And saw them smile or sigh their hours away;
But still he only saw, and did not share
The common pleasure or the general care;
He did not follow what they all pursued,
With hope still baffled, still to be renew'd;
Nor shadowy honor, nor substantial gain,
Nor beauty's preference, and the rival's pain:
Around him some mysterious circle thrown
Repell'd approach, and show'd him still alone;
Upon his eye sate something of reproof,
That kept at least frivolity aloof;
And things more timid that beheld him near,
In silence gazed, or whisper'd mutual fear;
And they the wiser, friendlier few confess'd
They deem'd him better than his air express'd.

VIII.

'Twas strange—in youth all action and all life,
Burning for pleasure, not averse from strife;
Woman—the field—the ocean—all that gave
Promise of gladness, peril of a grave,
In turn he tried—he ransack'd all below,
And found his recompense in joy or woe,
No tame, trite medium; for his feelings sought
In that intenseness an escape from thought:
The tempest of his heart in scorn had gazed
On that the feebler elements hath raised;
The rapture of his heart had look'd on high,
And ask'd if greater dwelt beyond the sky:

Chain'd to excess, the slave of each extreme,
How woke he from the wildness of that dream?
Alas! he told not—but he did awake
To curse the wither'd heart that would not break.

IX.

Books, for his volume heretofore was Man,
With eye more curious he appear'd to scan,
And oft, in sudden mood, for many a day
From all communion he would start away:
And then, his rarely call'd attendants said,
Through night's long hours would sound his hurried tread
O'er the dark gallery, where his fathers frown'd
In rude but antique portraiture around.
They heard, but whisper'd—"*that* must not be known—
The sound of words less earthly than his own.
Yes, they who chose might smile, but some had seen
They scarce knew what, but more than should have been.
Why gazed he so upon the ghastly head
Which hands profane had gather'd from the dead,
That still beside his open'd volume lay,
As if to startle all save him away?
Why slept he not when others were at rest?
Why heard no music, and received no guest?
All was not well, they deem'd—but where the wrong?
Some knew perchance—but 'twere a tale too long;
And such besides were too discreetly wise,
To more than hint their knowledge in surmise;
But if they would—they could"—around the board,
Thus Lara's vassals prattled of their lord.

X.

It was the night—and Lara's glassy stream
The stars are studding, each with imaged beam:
So calm, the waters scarcely seem to stray,
And yet they glide like happiness away;
Reflecting far and fairy-like from high
The immortal lights that live along the sky:
Its banks are fringed with many a goodly tree,
And flowers the fairest that may feast the bee;
Such in her chaplet infant Dian wove,
And Innocence would offer to her love.
These deck the shore; the waves their channel make
In windings bright and mazy like the snake.
All was so still, so soft in earth and air,
You scarce would start to meet a spirit there;
Secure that nought of evil could delight
To walk in such a scene, on such a night!
It was a moment only for the good:
So Lara deem'd, nor longer there he stood,
But turn'd in silence to his castle-gate;
Such scene his soul no more could contemplate:
Such scene reminded him of other days,
Of skies more cloudless, moons of purer blaze,

Of nights more soft and frequent, hearts that now—
No—no—the storm may beat upon his brow,
Unfelt—unsparing—but a night like this,
A night of beauty mock'd such breast as his.

XI.

He turn'd within his solitary hall,
And his high shadow shot along the wall;
There were the painted forms of other times,
'Twas all they left of virtues or of crimes,
Save vague tradition; and the gloomy vaults
That hid their dust, their foibles, and their faults;
And half a column of the pompous page,
That speeds the specious tale from age to age:
When history's pen its praise or blame supplies,
And lies like truth, and still most truly lies.
He wandering mused, and as the moonbeam shone
Through the dim lattice o'er the floor of stone,
And the high fretted roof, and saints, that there
O'er Gothic windows knelt in pictured prayer,
Reflected in fantastic figures grew,
Like life, but not like mortal life, to view;
His bristling locks of sable, brow of gloom,
And the wide waving of his shaken plume,
Glanced like a spectre's attributes, and gave
His aspect all that terror gives the grave.

XII.

'Twas midnight—all was slumber; the lone light
Dimm'd in the lamp, as loth to break the night.
Hark! there be murmurs heard in Lara's hall—
A sound—a voice—a shriek—a fearful call!
A long, loud shriek—and silence—did they hear
That frantic echo burst the sleeping ear?
They heard and rose, and tremulously brave
Rushed where the sound invoked their aid to save;
They come with half-lit tapers in their hands,
And snatch'd in startled haste unbelted brands.

XIII.

Cold as the marble where his length was laid,
Pale as the beam that o'er his features play'd,
Was Lara stretch'd; his half-drawn sabre near,
Dropp'd it should seem in more than nature's fear;
Yet he was firm, or had been firm till now,
And still defiance knit his gather'd brow;
Though mix'd with terror, senseless as he lay,
There lived upon his lip the wish to slay;
Some half-form'd threat in utterance there had died,
Some imprecation of despairing pride;
His eye was almost seal'd, but not forsook
Even in its trance the gladiator's look,
That oft awake his aspect could disclose,
And now was fix'd in horrible repose.
They raise him—bear him: hush! he breathes, he speaks.
The swarthy blush recolors in his cheeks,

His lip resumes its red, his eye, though dim,
Rolls wide and wild, each slowly quivering limb
Recalls its function, but his words are strung
In terms that seem not of his native tongue;
Distinct but strange, enough they understand
To deem them accents of another land,
And such they were, and meant to meet an ear
That hears him not—alas! that cannot hear!

XIV.

His page approach'd, and he alone appear'd
To know the import of the words they heard;
And by the changes of his cheek and brow
They were not such as Lara should avow,
Nor he interpret, yet with less surprise
Than those around their chieftain's state he eyes,
But Lara's prostrate form he bent beside,
And in that tongue which seem'd his own replied,
And Lara heeds those tones that gently seem
To soothe away the horrors of his dream;
It dream it were, that thus could overthrow
A breast that needed not ideal woe.

XV.

Whate'er his frenzy dream'd or eye beheld,
If yet remember'd ne'er to be reveal'd,
Rests at his heart: the custom'd morning came,
And breathed new vigor in his shaking frame;
And solace sought he none from priest nor leech,
And soon the same in movement and in speech
As heretofore he fill'd the passing hours,
Nor less he smiles, nor more his forehead lours
Than these were wont; and if the coming night
Appear'd less welcome now to Lara's sight,
He to his marvelling vassals show'd it not,
Whose shuddering proved *their* fear was less forgot.
In trembling pairs (alone they dared not) crawl
The astonish'd slaves, and shun the fated hall;
The waving banner, and the clapping door;
The rustling tapestry, and the echoing floor;
The long dim shadows of surrounding trees,
The flapping bat, the night song of the breeze;
Aught they behold or hear their thought appalls
As evening saddens o'er the dark gray walls.

XVI.

Vain thought! that hour of ne'er unravell'd gloom
Came not again, or Lara could assume
A seeming of forgetfulness that made
His vassals more amazed nor less afraid—
Had memory vanish'd then with sense restored?
Since word, nor look, nor gesture of their lord
Betray'd a feeling that recall'd to these
That fever'd moment of his mind's disease.
Was it a dream? was his the voice that spoke
Those strange wild accents; his the cry that broke

Their slumber? his the oppress'd o'erlabor'd heart
That ceased to beat, the look that made them start?
Could he who thus had suffer'd, so forget
When such as saw that suffering shudder yet?
Or did that silence prove his memory fix'd
Too deep for words, indelible, unmix'd
In that corroding secrecy which gnaws
The heart to show the effect, but not the cause?
Not so in him; his breast had buried both,
Nor common gazers could discern the growth
Of thoughts that mortal lips must leave half told;
They choke the feeble words that would unfold.

XVII.

In him inexplicably mix'd appear'd
Much to be loved and hated, sought and fear'd;
Opinion varying o'er his hidden lot,
In praise or railing ne'er his name forgot:
His silence form'd a theme for others' prate—
They guess'd—they gazed—they fain would know his fate.
What had he been? what was he, thus unknown,
Who walk'd their world, his lineage only known?
A hater of his kind? yet some would say,
With them he could seem gay amidst the gay;
But own'd that smile, if oft observed and near,
Waned in its mirth and wither'd to a sneer;
That smile might reach his lip, but pass'd not by,
None e'er could trace its laughter to his eye.
Yet there was softness too in his regard,
At times, a heart as not by nature hard,
But once perceived, his spirit seem'd to chide
Such weakness, as unworthy of its pride,
And steel'd itself, as scorning to redeem
One doubt from others' half withheld esteem;
In self-inflicted penance of a breast
Which tenderness might once have wrung from rest;
In vigilance of grief that would compel
The soul to hate for having loved too well.

XVIII.

There was in him a vital scorn of all:
As if the worst had fall'n which could befall,
He stood a stranger in this breathing world,
An erring spirit from another hurled;
A thing of dark imaginings, that shaped
By choice the perils he by chance escaped;
But 'scaped in vain, for in their memory yet
His mind would half exult and half regret:
With more capacity for love than earth
Bestows on most of mortal mould and birth,
His early dreams of good outstripp'd the truth,
And troubled manhood follow'd baffled youth;
With thought of years in phantom chase misspent,
And wasted powers for better purpose lent;

And fiery passions that had pour'd their wrath
In hurried desolation o'er his path,
And left the better feelings all at strife
In wild reflection o'er his stormy life;
But haughty still, and loth himself to blame,
He call'd on Nature's self to share the shame,
And charged all faults upon the fleshly form
She gave to clog the soul, and feast the worm;
Till he at last confounded good and ill,
And half mistook for fate the acts of will:
Too high for common selfishness, he could
At times resign his own for others' good,
But not in pity, not because he ought,
But in some strange perversity of thought,
That sway'd him onward with a secret pride
To do what few or none would do beside;
And this same impulse would, in tempting time,
Mislead his spirit equally to crime;
So much he soar'd beyond, or sunk beneath
The men with whom he felt condemn'd to breathe,
And long'd by good or ill to separate
Himself from all who shared his mortal state;
His mind abhorring this had fix'd her throne
Far from the world, in regions of her own;
Thus coldly passing all that pass'd below,
His blood in temperate seeming now would flow:
Ah! happier if it ne'er with guilt had glow'd,
But ever in that icy smoothness flow'd:
'Tis true, with other men their path he walk'd,
And like the rest in seeming did and talk'd,
Nor outraged Reason's rules by flaw nor start,
His madness was not of the head, but heart;
And rarely wander'd in his speech, or drew
His thoughts so forth as to offend the view.

XIX.

With all that chilling mystery of mien,
And seeming gladness to remain unseen;
He had (if 'twere not nature's boon) an art
Of fixing memory on another's heart:
It was not love, perchance—nor hate—nor aught
That words can image to express the thought;
But they who saw him did not see in vain,
And once beheld, would ask of him again:
And those to whom he spake remember'd well,
And on the words, however light, would dwell:
None knew nor how, nor why, but he entwined
Himself perforce around the hearer's mind;
There he was stamp'd, in liking, or in hate,
If greeted once; however brief the date
That friendship, pity, or aversion knew,
Still there within the inmost thought he grew.
You could not penetrate his soul, but found,
Despite your wonder, to your own he wound;

His presence haunted still; and from the breast
He forced an all-unwilling interest;
Vain was the struggle in that mental net,
His spirit seem'd to dare you to forget!

XX.

There is a festival, where knights and dames,
And aught that wealth or lofty lineage claims,
Appear—a high-born and a welcomed guest
To Otho's hall came Lara with the rest.
The long carousal shakes the illumined hall,
Well speeds alike the banquet and the ball;
And the gay dance of bounding Beauty's train
Links grace and harmony in happiest chain:
Blest are the early hearts and gentle hands
That mingle there in well according bands;
It is a sight the careful brow might smooth,
And make Age smile, and dream itself to youth,
And Youth forget such hour was pass'd on earth,
So springs the exulting bosom to that mirth!

XXI.

And Lara gazed on these sedately glad,
His brow belied him if his soul was sad,
And his glance follow'd fast each fluttering fair,
Whose steps of lightness woke no echo there:
He lean'd against the lofty pillar nigh
With folded arms and long attentive eye,
Nor mark'd a glance so sternly fix'd on his,
Ill brook'd high Lara scrutiny like this:
At length he caught it, 'tis a face unknown,
But seems as searching his, and his alone;
Prying and dark, a stranger's by his mien,
Who still till now had gazed on him unseen;
At length encountering meets the mutual gaze
Of keen inquiry, and of mute amaze;
On Lara's glance emotion gathering grew,
As if distrusting that the stranger threw;
Along the stranger's aspect fix'd and stern
Flash'd more than thence the vulgar eye could learn.

XXII.

"'Tis he!" the stranger cried, and those that heard
Re-echo'd fast and far the whisper'd word.
"'Tis he!"—"'Tis who?" they question far and near,
Till louder accents rung on Lara's ear;
So widely spread, few bosoms well could brook
The general marvel, or that single look;
But Lara stirr'd not, changed not, the surprise
That sprung at first to his arrested eyes
Seem'd now subsided, neither sunk nor raised
Glanced his eye round, though still the stranger gazed;
And drawing nigh, exclaim'd, with haughty sneer,
"'Tis he!—how came he thence?—what doth he here?"

XXIII.

It were too much for Lara to pass by
Such question, so repeated fierce and high;
With look collected, but with accent cold,
More mildly firm than petulantly bold,
He turn'd, and met the inquisitorial tone—
"My name is Lara!—when thine own is known,
Doubt not my fitting answer to requite
The unlook'd for courtesy of such a knight.
'Tis Lara!—further wouldst thou mark or ask?
I shun no question, and I wear no mask."
"Thou shunn'st no question! Ponder—is there none?
Thy heart must answer, though thine ear would shun:
And deem'st thou me unknown too? Gaze again!
At least thy memory was not given in vain.
Oh! never canst thou cancel half her debt,
Eternity forbids thee to forget."
With slow and searching glance upon his face
Grew Lara's eyes, but nothing there could trace
They knew, or chose to know—with dubious look
He deign'd no answer, but his head he shook,
And half contemptuous turn'd to pass away;
But the stern stranger motion'd him to stay.
"A word!—I charge thee stay, and answer here
To one, who, wert thou noble, were thy peer,
But as thou wast and art—nay, frown not, lord,
If false, 'tis easy to disprove the word—
But as thou wast and art, on thee looks down,
Distrusts thy smiles, but shakes not at thy frown.
Art thou not he? whose deeds—"
"Whate'er I be,
Words wild as these, accusers like to thee,
I list no further; those with whom they weigh
May hear the rest, nor venture to gainsay
The wondrous tale no doubt thy tongue can tell,
Which thus begins so courteously and well.
Let Otho cherish here his polish'd guest,
To him my thanks and thoughts shall be express'd."
And here their wondering host hath interposed—
"Whate'er there be between you undisclosed,
This is no time nor fitting place to mar
The mirthful meeting with a wordy war.
If thou, Sir Ezzelin, hast aught to show
Which it befits Count Lara's ear to know,
To-morrow, here, or elsewhere, as may best
Beseem your mutual judgment, speak the rest;
I pledge myself for thee, as not unknown,
Though, like Count Lara, now return'd alone
From other lands, almost a stranger grown;
And if from Lara's blood and gentle birth
I augur right of courage and of worth,
He will not that untainted line belie,
Nor aught that knighthood may accord deny."
"To-morrow be it," Ezzelin replied,
"And here our several worth and truth be tried;

I gage my life, my falchion to attest
My words, so may I mingle with the blest!"
What answers Lara? to its centre shrunk
His soul, in deep abstraction sudden sunk;
The words of many, and the eyes of all
That there were gather'd, seem'd on him to fall;
But his were silent, his appear'd to stray
In far forgetfulness away—away—
Alas! that heedlessness of all around
Bespoke remembrance only too profound.

XXIV.

"To-morrow!—ay, to-morrow!" further word
Than those repeated none from Lara heard;
Upon his brow no outward passion spoke,
From his large eye no flashing anger broke;
Yet there was something fix'd in that low tone
Which show'd resolve, determined, though unknown.
He seized his cloak—his head he slightly bow'd,
And passing Ezzelin he left the crowd;
And, as he pass'd him, smiling met the frown
With which that chieftain's brow would bear him down:
It was nor smile of mirth, nor struggling pride
That curbs to scorn the wrath it cannot hide;
But that of one in his own heart secure
Of all that he would do, or could endure.
Could this mean peace? the calmness of the good?
Or guilt grown old in desperate hardihood?
Alas! too like in confidence are each
For man to trust to mortal look or speech;
From deeds, and deeds alone, may he discern
Truths which it wrings the unpractised heart to learn.

XXV.

And Lara call'd his page, and went his way—
Well could that stripling word or sign obey:
His only follower from those climes afar
Where the soul glows beneath a brighter star;
For Lara left the shore from whence he sprung,
In duty patient, and sedate though young;
Silent as him he served, his fate appears
Above his station, and beyond his years.
Though not unknown the tongue of Lara's land,
In such from him he rarely heard command;
But fleet his step, and clear his tones would come,
When Lara's lip breathed forth the words of home:
Those accents, as his native mountains dear,
Awake their absent echoes in his ear,
Friends', kindreds', parents', wonted voice recall,
Now lost, abjured, for one—his friend, his all:
For him earth now disclosed no other guide;
What marvel then he rarely left his side?

XXVI.

Light was his form, and darkly delicate
That brow whereon his native sun had sate,

But had not marr'd, though in his beams he grew,
The cheek where oft the unbidden blush shone through;
Yet not such blush as mounts when health would show
All the heart's hue in that delighted glow;
But 'twas a hectic tint of secret care
That for a burning moment fever'd there;
And the wild sparkle of his eye seem'd caught
From high, and lighten'd with electric thought,
Though its black orb those long low lashes' fringe
Had temper'd with a melancholy tinge;
Yet less of sorrow than of pride was there,
Or, if 'twere grief, a grief that none should share:
And pleased not him the sports that please his age,
The tricks of youth, the frolics of the page;
For hours on Lara he would fix his glance,
As all-forgotten in that watchful trance;
And from his chief withdrawn, he wander'd lone,
Brief were his answers, and his questions none;
His walk the wood, his sport some foreign book;
His resting-place the bank that curbs the brook:
He seem'd, like him he served, to live apart
From all that lures the eye, and fills the heart;
To know no brotherhood, and take from earth
No gift beyond that bitter boon—our birth.

XXVII.

If aught he loved, 'twas Lara; but was shown
His faith in reverence and in deeds alone;
In mute attention; and his care, which guess'd
Each wish, fulfill'd it ere the tongue express'd.
Still there was haughtiness in all he did,
A spirit deep that brook'd not to be chid;
His zeal, though more than that of servile hands,
In act alone obeys, his air commands;
As if 'twas Lara's less than *his* desire
That thus he served, but surely not for hire.
Slight were the tasks enjoin'd him by his lord,
To hold the stirrup, or to bear the sword;
To tune his lute, or, if he will'd it more,
On tomes of other times and tongues to pore;
But ne'er to mingle with the menial train,
To whom he show'd not deference nor disdain,
But that well-worn reserve which proved he knew
No sympathy with that familiar crew:
His soul, whate'er his station or his stem,
Could bow to Lara, not descend to them.
Of higher birth he seem'd, and better days,
Nor mark of vulgar toil that hand betrays,
So femininely white it might bespeak
Another sex, when match'd with that smooth cheek,
But for his garb, and something in his gaze,
More wild and high than woman's eye betrays;
A latent fierceness that far more became
His fiery climate than his tender frame:
True, in his words it broke not from his breast,
But from his aspect might be more than guess'd.

Kaled his name, though rumor said he bore
Another ere he left his mountain shore;
For sometimes he would hear, however nigh,
That name repeated loud without reply,
As unfamiliar, or, if roused again,
Start to the sound, as but remember'd then;
Unless 'twas Lara's wonted voice that spake,
For then, ear, eyes, and heart would all awake.

XXVIII.

He had look'd down upon the festive hall,
And mark'd that sudden strife so mark'd of all;
And when the crowd around and near him told
Their wonder at the calmness of the bold,
Their marvel how the high-born Lara bore
Such insult from a stranger, doubly sore,
The color of young Kaled went and came,
The lip of ashes, and the cheek of flame;
And o'er his brow the dampening heart-drops threw
The sickening iciness of that cold dew
That rises as the busy bosom sinks
With heavy thoughts from which reflection shrinks.
Yes—there be things which we must dream and dare,
And execute ere thought be half aware:
Whate'er might Kaled's be, it was enow
To seal his lip, but agonize his brow.
He gazed on Ezzelin till Lara cast
That sidelong smile upon the knight he pass'd;
When Kaled saw that smile his visage fell,
As if on something recognized right well:
His memory read in such a meaning more
Than Lara's aspect unto others wore.
Forward he sprung—a moment, both were gone,
And all within that hall seem'd left alone;
Each had so fix'd his eye on Lara's mien,
All had so mix'd their feelings with that scene,
That when his long dark shadow through the porch
No more relieves the glare of yon high torch,
Each pulse beats quicker, and all bosoms seem
To bound as doubting from too black a dream,
Such as we know is false, yet dread in sooth,
Because the worst is ever nearest truth.
And they are gone—but Ezzelin is there,
With thoughtful visage and imperious air;
But long remain'd not; ere an hour expired
He waved his hand to Otho, and retired.

XXIX.

The crowd are gone, the revellers at rest;
The courteous host, and all-approving guest,
Again to that accustom'd couch must creep
Where joy subsides, and sorrow sighs to sleep,
And man, o'erlabor'd with his being's strife,
Shrinks to that sweet forgetfulness of life:
There lie love's feverish hope, and cunning's guile,
Hate's working brain, and lull'd ambition's wile;

O'er each vain eye oblivion's pinions wave,
And quench'd existence crouches in a grave.
What better name may slumber's bed become?
Night's sepulchre, the universal home,
Where weakness, strength, vice, virtue, sunk supine,
Alike in naked helplessness recline;
Glad for awhile to heave unconscious breath,
Yet wake to wrestle with the dread of death,
And shun, though day but dawn on ills increased,
That sleep, the loveliest, since it dreams the least.

CANTO THE SECOND.

I.

Night wanes—the vapors round the mountains curl'd,
Melt into morn, and Light awakes the world.
Man has another day to swell the past,
And lead him near to little, but his last;
But mighty Nature bounds as from her birth,
The sun is in the heavens, and life on earth;
Flowers in the valley, splendor in the beam,
Health on the gale, and freshness in the stream.
Immortal man! behold her glories shine,
And cry, exulting inly, "They are thine!"
Gaze on, while yet thy gladden'd eye may see,
A morrow comes when they are not for thee;
And grieve what may above thy senseless bier,
Nor earth nor sky will yield a single tear;
Nor cloud shall gather more, nor leaf shall fall,
Nor gale breathe forth one sigh for thee, for all;
But creeping things shall revel in their spoil,
And fit thy clay to fertilize the soil.

II.

'Tis morn—'tis noon—assembled in the hall,
The gather'd chieftains come to Otho's call:
'Tis now the promised hour that must proclaim
The life or death of Lara's future fame;
When Ezzelin his charge may here unfold,
And whatsoe'er the tale, it must be told.
His faith was pledged, and Lara's promise given,
To meet it in the eye of man and Heaven.
Why comes he not? Such truths to be divulged,
Methinks the accuser's rest is long indulged.

III.

The hour is past, and Lara too is there,
With self-confiding, coldly patient air;
Why comes not Ezzelin? The hour is past,
And murmurs rise, and Otho's brow 's o'ercast:
"I know my friend! his faith I cannot fear,
If yet he be on earth, expect him here;
The roof that held him in the valley stands
Between my own and noble Lara's lands;

My halls from such a guest had honor gain'd,
Nor had Sir Ezzelin his host disdain'd,
But that some previous proof forbade his stay,
And urged him to prepare against to-day;
The word I pledged for his I pledge again,
Or will myself redeem his knighthood's stain."

He ceased—and Lara answer'd: "I am here
To lend at thy demand a listening ear,
To tales of evil from a stranger's tongue,
Whose words already might my heart have wrung,
But that I deem'd him scarcely less than mad,
Or, at the worst, a foe ignobly bad.
I know him not—but me it seems he knew
In lands where—but I must not trifle too:
Produce this babbler—or redeem the pledge;
Here in thy hold, and with thy falchion's edge."

Proud Otho on the instant, reddening, threw
His glove on earth, and forth his sabre flew.
"The last alternative befits me best,
And thus I answer for mine absent guest."

With cheek unchanging from its sallow gloom,
However near his own or other's tomb;
With hand, whose almost careless coolness spoke
Its grasp well-used to deal the sabre-stroke;
With eye, though calm, determined not to spare,
Did Lara too his willing weapon bare.
In vain the circling chieftains round them closed,
For Otho's frenzy would not be opposed;
And from his lip those words of insult fell—
His sword is good who can maintain them well.

IV.

Short was the conflict; furious, blindly rash,
Vain Otho gave his bosom to the gash:
He bled, and fell; but not with deadly wound,
Stretch'd by a dextrous sleight along the ground.
"Demand thy life!" He answer'd not: and then
From that red floor he ne'er had risen again,
For Lara's brow upon the moment grew
Almost to blackness in its demon hue;
And fiercer shook his angry falchion now
Than when his foe's was levell'd at his brow;
Then all was stern collectedness and art,
Now rose the unleaven'd hatred of his heart;
So little sparing to the foe he fell'd,
That when the approaching crowd his arm withheld,
He almost turn'd the thirsty point on those
Who thus for mercy dared to interpose;
But to a moment's thought that purpose bent;
Yet look'd he on him still with eye intent,
As if he loathed the ineffectual strife
That left a foe, howe'er o'erthrown, with life;
As if to search how far the wound he gave
Had sent its victim onward to his grave.

V.

They raised the bleeding Otho, and the Leech
Forbade all present question, sign, and speech;
The others met within a neighboring hall,
And he, incensed and heedless of them all,
The cause and conqueror in this sudden fray,
In haughty silence slowly strode away;
He back'd his steed, his homeward path he took,
Nor cast on Otho's tower a single look.

VI.

But where was he? that meteor of a night,
Who menaced but to disappear with light.
Where was this Ezzelin? who came and went
To leave no other trace of his intent.
He left the dome of Otho long ere morn,
In darkness, yet so well the path was worn
He could not miss it: near his dwelling lay;
But there he was not, and with coming day
Came fast inquiry, which unfolded nought
Except the absence of the chief it sought.
A chamber tenantless, a steed at rest,
His host alarm'd, his murmuring squires distress'd:
Their search extends along, around the path,
In dread to meet the marks of prowlers' wrath:
But none are there, and not a brake hath borne
Nor gout of blood, nor shred of mantle torn;
Nor fall nor struggle hath defaced the grass,
Which still retains a mark where murder was;
Nor dabbling fingers left to tell the tale,
The bitter print of each convulsive nail,
When agonized hands that cease to guard,
Wound in that pang the smoothness of the sward.
Some such had been, if here a life was reft,
But these were not; and doubting hope is left;
And strange suspicion, whispering Lara's name,
Now daily mutters o'er his blacken'd fame;
Then sudden silent when his form appear'd,
Awaits the absence of the thing it fear'd;
Again its wonted wondering to renew,
And dye conjecture with a darker hue.

VII.

Days roll along, and Otho's wounds are heal'd,
But not his pride; and hate no more conceal'd:
He was a man of power, and Lara's foe,
The friend of all who sought to work him woe,
And from his country's justice now demands
Account of Ezzelin at Lara's hands.
Who else than Lara could have cause to fear
His presence? who had made him disappear,
If not the man on whom his menaced charge
Had sate too deeply were he left at large?
The general rumor ignorantly loud,
The mystery dearest to the curious crowd;

The seeming friendlessness of him who strove
To win no confidence, and wake no love;
The sweeping fierceness which his soul betray'd,
The skill with which he wielded his keen blade;
Where had his arm unwarlike caught that art?
Where had that fierceness grown upon his heart?
For it was not the blind capricious rage
A word can kindle and a word assuage;
But the deep working of a soul unmix'd
With aught of pity where its wrath had fix'd;
Such as long power and overgorged success
Concentrates into all that 's merciless:
These, link'd with that desire which ever sways
Mankind, the rather to condemn than praise,
'Gainst Lara gathering raised at length a storm,
Such as himself might fear, and foes would form,
And he must answer for the absent head
Of one that haunts him still, alive or dead.

VIII.

Within that land was many a malcontent,
Who cursed the tyranny to which he bent;
That soil full many a wringing despot saw,
Who work'd his wantonness in form of law;
Long war without and frequent broil within
Had made a path for blood and giant sin,
That waited but a signal to begin
New havoc, such as civil discord blends,
Which knows no neuter, owns but foes or friends;
Fix'd in his feudal fortress each was lord,
In word and deed obey'd, in soul abhorr'd.
Thus Lara had inherited his lands,
And with them pining hearts and sluggish hands;
But that long absence from his native clime
Had left him stainless of oppression's crime,
And now, diverted by his milder sway,
All dread by slow degrees had worn away;
The menials felt their usual awe alone,
But more for him than them that fear was grown;
They deem'd him now unhappy, though at first
Their evil judgment augur'd of the worst,
And each long restless night, and silent mood,
Was traced to sickness, fed by solitude:
And though his lonely habits threw of late
Gloom o'er his chamber, cheerful was his gate;
For thence the wretched ne'er unsoothed withdrew,
For them, at least, his soul compassion knew.
Cold to the great, contemptuous to the high,
The humble pass'd not his unheeding eye;
Much he would speak not, but beneath his roof
They found asylum oft, and ne'er reproof.
And they who watch'd might mark that, day by day,
Some new retainers gather'd to his sway;
But most of late, since Ezzelin was lost,
He play'd the courteous lord and bounteous host:

Perchance his strife with Otho made him dread
Some snare prepared for his obnoxious head;
Whate'er his view, his favor more obtains
With these, the people, than his fellow thanes.
If this were policy, so far 'twas sound,
The million judged but of him as they found;
From him by sterner chiefs to exile driven
They but required a shelter, and 'twas given.
By him no peasant mourn'd his rifled cot,
And scarce the serf could murmur o'er his lot;
With him old avarice found its hoard secure,
With him contempt forbore to mock the poor;
Youth present cheer and promised recompense
Detain'd, till all too late to part from thence:
To hate he offer'd, with the coming change,
The deep reversion of delay'd revenge;
To love, long baffled by the unequal match,
The well-won charms success was sure to snatch.
All now was ripe, he waits but to proclaim
That slavery nothing which was still a name.
The moment came, the hour when Otho thought
Secure at last the vengeance which he sought:
His summons found the destined criminal
Begirt by thousands in his swarming hall,
Fresh from their feudal fetters newly riven,
Defying earth, and confident of heaven.
That morning he had freed the soil-bound slaves
Who dig no land for tyrants but their graves!
Such is their cry—some watchword for the fight
Must vindicate the wrong, and warp the right:
Religion—freedom—vengeance—what you will,
A word 's enough to raise mankind to kill;
Some factious phrase by cunning caught and spread,
That guilt may reign, and wolves and worms be fed!

IX.

Throughout that clime the feudal chiefs had gain'd
Such sway, their infant monarch hardly reign'd;
Now was the hour for faction's rebel growth,
The serfs contemn'd the one, and hated both:
They waited but a leader, and they found
One to their cause inseparably bound;
By circumstance compell'd to plunge again,
In self-defence, amidst the strife of men.
Cut off by some mysterious fate from those
Whom birth and nature meant not for his foes,
Had Lara from that night, to him accurst,
Prepared to meet, but not alone, the worst:
Some reason urged, whate'er it was, to shun
Inquiry into deeds at distance done;
By mingling with his own the cause of all,
E'en if he fail'd, he still delay'd his fall.
The sullen calm that long his bosom kept,
The storm that once had spent itself and slept,
Roused by events that seem'd foredoom'd to urge
His gloomy fortunes to their utmost verge,

Burst forth, and made him all he once had been,
And is again; he only changed the scene.
Light care had he for life, and less for fame,
But not less fitted for the desperate game:
He deem'd himself mark'd out for others' hate,
And mock'd at ruin, so they shared his fate.
What cared he for the freedom of the crowd?
He raised the humble but to bend the proud.
He had hoped quiet in his sullen lair,
But man and destiny beset him there:
Inured to hunters, he was found at bay;
And they must kill, they cannot snare the prey.
Stern, unambitious, silent he had been
Henceforth a calm spectator of life's scene;
But dragg'd again upon the arena, stood
A leader not unequal to the feud;
In voice—mien—gesture—savage nature spoke,
And from his eye the gladiator broke.

X.

What boots the oft-repeated tale of strife,
The feast of vultures, and the waste of life?
The varying fortune of each separate field,
The fierce that vanquish, and the faint that yield?
The smoking ruin, and the crumbled wall?
In this the struggle was the same with all;
Save that distemper'd passions lent their force
In bitterness that banish'd all remorse.
None sued, for Mercy knew her cry was vain,
The captive died upon the battle-slain:
In either cause, one rage alone possess'd
The empire of the alternate victor's breast;
And they that smote for freedom or for sway,
Deem'd few were slain, while more remain'd to slay.
It was too late to check the wasting brand,
And Desolation reap'd the famish'd land;
The torch was lighted, and the flame was spread,
And Carnage smiled upon her daily bread.

XI.

Fresh with the nerve the new-born impulse strung,
The first success to Lara's numbers clung:
But that vain victory hath ruin'd all;
They form no longer to their leader's call:
In blind confusion on the foe they press,
And think to snatch is to secure success.
The lust of booty, and the thirst of hate,
Lure on the broken brigands to their fate:
In vain he doth whate'er a chief may do,
To check the headlong fury of that crew;
In vain their stubborn ardor he would tame,
The hand that kindles cannot quench the flame;
The wary foe alone hath turn'd their mood,
And shown their rashness to that erring brood:
The feign'd retreat, the nightly ambuscade,
The daily harass, and the fight delay'd,

The long privation of the hoped supply,
The tentless rest beneath the humid sky,
The stubborn wall that mocks the leaguer's art,
And palls the patience of his baffled heart,
Of these they had not deem'd: the battle-day
They could encounter as a veteran may;
But more preferr'd the fury of the strife,
And present death, to hourly suffering life:
And famine wrings, and fever sweeps away
His numbers melting fast from their array;
Intemperate triumph fades to discontent,
And Lara's soul alone seems still unbent:
But few remain to aid his voice and hand,
And thousands dwindled to a scanty band:
Desperate, though few, the last and best remain'd
To mourn the discipline they late disdain'd.
One hope survives, the frontier is not far,
And thence they may escape from native war;
And bear within them to the neighboring state
An exile's sorrows, or an outlaw's hate:
Hard is the task their fatherland to quit,
But harder still to perish or submit.

XII.

It is resolved—they march—consenting Night
Guides with her star their dim and torchless flight.
Already they perceive its tranquil beam
Sleep on the surface of the barrier stream;
Already they descry—Is yon the bank?
Away! 'tis lined with many a hostile rank.
Return or fly!—What glitters in the rear?
'Tis Otho's banner—the pursuer's spear!
Are those the shepherds' fires upon the height?
Alas! they blaze too widely for the flight:
Cut off from hope, and compass'd in the toil,
Less blood, perchance, hath bought a richer spoil!

XIII.

A moment's pause—'tis but to breathe their band,
Or shall they onward press, or here withstand?
It matters little—if they charge the foes
Who by their border-stream their march oppose,
Some few, perchance, may break and pass the line,
However link'd to baffle such design.
"The charge be ours! to wait for their assault
Were fate well worthy of a coward's halt."
Forth flies each sabre, rein'd is every steed,
And the next word shall scarce outstrip the deed:
In the next tone of Lara's gathering breath
How many shall but hear the voice of death!

XIV.

His blade is bared—in him there is an air
As deep, but far too tranquil for despair;
A something of indifference more than then
Becomes the bravest, if they feel for men.

He turn'd his eye on Kaled, ever near,
And still too faithful to betray one fear;
Perchance 'twas but the moon's dim twilight threw
Along his aspect an unwonted hue
Of mournful paleness, whose deep tint express'd
The truth, and not the terror of his breast.
This Lara mark'd, and laid his hand on his:
It trembled not in such an hour as this;
His lip was silent, scarcely beat his heart,
His eye alone proclaim'd—
"We will not part!
Thy hand may perish, or thy friends may flee,
Farewell to life, but not adieu to thee!"

The word hath pass'd his lips, and onward driven,
Pours the link'd band through ranks asunder riven;
Well has each steed obey'd the armed heel,
And flash the scimitars, and rings the steel;
Outnumber'd, not outbraved, they still oppose
Despair to daring, and a front to foes;
And blood is mingled with the dashing stream,
Which runs all redly till the morning beam.

XV.

Commanding, aiding, animating all,
Where foe appear'd to press, or friend to fall,
Cheers Lara's voice, and waves or strikes his steel,
Inspiring hope himself had ceased to feel.
None fled, for well they knew that flight were vain,
But those that waver turn to smite again,
While yet they find the firmest of the foe
Recoil before their leader's look and blow;
Now girt with numbers, now almost alone,
He foils their ranks, or reunites his own:
Himself he spared not—once they seem'd to fly—
Now was the time, he waved his hand on high,
And shook—Why sudden droops that plumed crest?
The shaft is sped—the arrow's in his breast!
That fatal gesture left the unguarded side,
And Death hath stricken down yon arm of pride.
The word of triumph fainted from his tongue;
That hand, so raised, how droopingly it hung!
But yet the sword instinctively retains,
Though from its fellow shrink the falling reins;
These Kaled snatches: dizzy with the blow,
And senseless bending o'er his saddle-bow
Perceives not Lara that his anxious page
Beguiles his charger from the combat's rage:
Meantime his followers charge and charge again;
Too mix'd the slayers now to heed the slain!

XVI.

Day glimmers on the dying and the dead,
The cloven cuirass, and the helmless head;
The war-horse masterless is on the earth,
And that last gasp hath burst his bloody girth;

And near, yet quivering with what life remain'd,
The heel that urged him, and the hand that rein'd.
And some too near that rolling torrent lie,
Whose waters mock the lip of those that die;
That panting thirst which scorches in the breath
Of those that die the soldier's fiery death,
In vain impels the burning mouth to crave
One drop—the last—to cool it for the grave;
With feeble and convulsive effort swept
Their limbs along the crimson'd turf have crept:
The faint remains of life such struggles waste,
But yet they reach the stream, and bend to taste:
They feel its freshness, and almost partake—
Why pause?—No further thirst have they to slake—
It is unquench'd, and yet they feel it not—
It was an agony—but now forgot!

XVII.

Beneath a lime, remoter from the scene,
Where but for him that strife had never been,
A breathing but devoted warrior lay:
'Twas Lara bleeding fast from life away.
His follower once, and now his only guide,
Kneels Kaled watchful o'er his welling side,
And with his scarf would stanch the tides that rush
With each convulsion in a blacker gush;
And then, as his faint breathing waxes low,
In feebler, not less fatal tricklings flow:
He scarce can speak, but motions him 'tis vain,
And merely adds another throb to pain.
He clasps the hand that pang which would assuage,
And sadly smiles his thanks to that dark page,
Who nothing fears, nor feels, nor heeds, nor sees,
Save that damp brow which rests upon his knees;
Save that pale aspect, where the eye, though dim,
Held all the light that shone on earth for him.

XVIII.

The foe arrives, who long had search'd the field,
Their triumph nought till Lara too should yield;
They would remove him, but they see 'twere vain,
And he regards them with a calm disdain,
That rose to reconcile him with his fate,
And that escape to death from living hate:
And Otho comes, and leaping from his steed,
Looks on the bleeding foe that made him bleed,
And questions of his state; he answers not,
Scarce glances on him as on one forgot,
And turns to Kaled:—each remaining word
They understood not, if distinctly heard;
His dying tones are in that other tongue,
To which some strange remembrance wildly clung.
They spake of other scenes, but what—is known
To Kaled, whom their meaning reach'd alone;
And he replied, though faintly, to their sound,
While gazed the rest in dumb amazement round:

They seem'd even then—that twain—unto the last
To half forget the present in the past;
To share between themselves some separate fate,
Whose darkness none beside should penetrate.

XIX.

Their words though faint were many—from the tone
Their import those who heard could judge alone;
From this, you might have deem'd young Kaled's death
More near than Lara's by his voice and breath,
So sad, so deep, and hesitating broke
The accents his scarce-moving pale lips spoke;
But Lara's voice, though low, at first was clear
And calm, till murmuring death gasp'd hoarsely near:
But from his visage little could we guess,
So unrepentant, dark, and passionless,
Save that when struggling nearer to his last,
Upon that page his eye was kindly cast;
And once, as Kaled's answering accents ceased,
Rose Lara's hand, and pointed to the East:
Whether (as then the breaking sun from high
Roll'd back the clouds) the morrow caught his eye,
Or that 'twas chance, or some remember'd scene
That raised his arm to point where such had been,
Scarce Kaled seem'd to know, but turn'd away,
As if his heart abhorr'd that coming day,
And shrunk his glance before that morning light
To look on Lara's brow—where all grew night.
Yet sense seem'd left, though better were its loss;
For when one near display'd the absolving cross,
And proffer'd to his touch the holy bead,
Of which his parting soul might own the need,
He look'd upon it with an eye profane,
And smiled—Heaven pardon! if 'twere with disdain;
And Kaled, though he spoke not, nor withdrew
From Lara's face his fix'd despairing view,
With brow repulsive, and with gesture swift,
Flung back the hand which held the sacred gift,
As if such but disturb'd the expiring man,
Nor seem'd to know his life but *then* began,
The life immortal, infinite, secure,
To all for whom that cross hath made it sure!

XX.

But gasping heaved the breath that Lara drew,
And dull the film along his dim eye grew;
His limbs stretch'd fluttering, and his head droop'd o'er
The weak yet still untiring knee that bore;
He press'd the hand he held upon his heart—
It beats no more, but Kaled will not part
With the cold grasp, but feels, and feels in vain,
For that faint throb which answers not again.
"It beats!"—Away, thou dreamer! he is gone—
It once was Lara which thou look'st upon.

XXI.

He gazed, as if not yet had pass'd away
The haughty spirit of that humble clay;
And those around have roused him from his trance,
But cannot tear from thence his fixed glance;
And when in raising him from where he bore
Within his arms the form that felt no more,
He saw the head his breast would still sustain,
Roll down like earth to earth upon the plain;
He did not dash himself thereby, nor tear
The glossy tendrils of his raven hair,
But strove to stand and gaze, but reel'd and fell,
Scarce breathing more than that he loved so well.
Than that *he* lov'd! Oh! never yet beneath
The breast of man such trusty love may breathe!
That trying moment hath at once reveal'd
The secret long and yet but half conceal'd;
In baring to revive that lifeless breast,
Its grief seem'd ended, but the sex confess'd;
And life return'd, and Kaled felt no shame—
What now to her was Womanhood or Fame?

XXII.

And Lara sleeps not where his fathers sleep,
But where he died his grave was dug as deep;
Nor is his mortal slumber less profound,
Though priest nor bless'd, nor marble deck'd the mound;
And he was mourn'd by one whose quiet grief,
Less loud, outlasts a people's for their chief.
Vain was all question ask'd her of the past,
And vain e'en menace—silent to the last;
She told nor whence nor why she left behind
Her all for one who seem'd but little kind.
Why did she love him? Curious fool!—be still—
Is human love the growth of human will?
To her he might be gentleness; the stern
Have deeper thoughts than your dull eyes discern,
And when they love, your smilers guess not how
Beats the strong heart, though less the lips avow.
They were not common links that form'd the chain
That bound to Lara Kaled's heart and brain;
But that wild tale she brook'd not to unfold,
And seal'd is now each lip that could have told.

XXIII.

They laid him in the earth, and on his breast,
Besides the wound that sent his soul to rest,
They found the scattered dints of many a scar
Which were not planted there in recent war:
Where'er had pass'd his summer years of life,
It seems they vanish'd in a land of strife;
But all unknown his glory or his guilt,
These only told that somewhere blood was spilt,
And Ezzelin, who might have spoke the past,
Return'd no more—that night appear'd his last.

XXIV.

Upon that night (a peasant's is the tale)
A Serf that cross'd the intervening vale,
When Cynthia's light almost gave way to morn,
And nearly veil'd in mist her waning horn;
A Serf, that rose betimes to thread the wood,
And hew the bough that bought his children's food,
Pass'd by the river that divides the plain
Of Otho's lands and Lara's broad domain:
He heard a tramp—a horse and horseman broke
From out the wood—before him was a cloak
Wrapt round some burden at his saddle-bow,
Bent was his head, and hidden was his brow.
Roused by the sudden sight at such a time,
And some foreboding that it might be crime,
Himself unheeded watch'd the stranger's course,
Who reach'd the river, bounded from his horse,
And lifting thence the burden which he bore,
Heaved up the bank, and dash'd it from the shore,*

* The event in this section was suggested by the description of the death, or rather burial, of the Duke of Gandia. The most interesting and particular account of it is given by Burchard, and is in substance as follows:—"On the eighth day of June, the Cardinal of Valenza and the Duke of Gandia, sons of the Pope, supped with their mother, Vanozza, near the church of *S. Pietro ad vincula;* several other persons being present at the entertainment. A late hour approaching, and the cardinal having reminded his brother that it was time to return to the apostolic palace, they mounted their horses or mules, with only a few attendants, and proceeded together as far as the palace of Cardinal Ascanio Sforza, when the duke informed the cardinal that, before he returned home, he had to pay a visit of pleasure. Dismissing therefore all his attendants, excepting his *staffiero*, or footman, and a person in a mask, who had paid him a visit while at supper, and who, during the space of a month, or thereabouts, previous to this time, had called upon him almost daily at the apostolic palace, he took this person behind him on his mule, and proceeded to the street of the Jews, where he quitted his servant, directing him to remain there until a certain hour; when, if he did not return, he might repair to the palace. The duke then seated the person in the mask behind him, and rode, I know not whither; but in that night he was assassinated, and thrown into the river. The servant, after having been dismissed, was also assaulted and mortally wounded; and although he was attended with great care, yet such was his situation that he could give no intelligible account of what had befallen his master. In the morning, the duke not having returned to the palace, his servants began to be alarmed; and one of them informed the pontiff of the evening excursion of his sons, and that the duke had not yet made his appearance. This gave the pope no small anxiety; but he conjectured that the duke had been attracted by some courtesan to pass the night with her, and, not choosing to quit the house in open day, had waited till the following evening to return home. When, however, the evening arrived, and he found himself disappointed in his expectations, he became deeply afflicted, and began to make inquiries from different persons, whom he ordered to attend him for that purpose. Amongst these was a man named Giorgio Schiavoni, who, having discharged some timber from a bark in the river, had remained on board the vessel to watch it; and being interrogated whether he had seen any one thrown into the river on the night preceding, he replied, that he saw two men on foot, who came down the street, and looked diligently about, to observe whether any person was passing. That seeing no one, they returned, and a short time afterwards two others came, and looked around in the same manner as the former: no person still appearing, they gave a sign to their companions, when a man came, mounted on a white horse, having behind him a dead body, the head and arms of which hung on one side, and the feet on the other side of the horse; the two persons on foot supporting the body, to prevent its falling. They thus proceeded towards that part where the filth of the city is usually discharged into the river, and turning the horse, with his tail towards the water, the two persons took the dead body by the arms and feet, and with all their strength flung it into the river. The person on horseback then asked if they had thrown it in; to which they replied, 'Signor, si' (Yes, sir). He then

Then paused, and look'd, and turn'd, and seem'd to watch,
And still another hurried glance would snatch,
And follow with his step the stream that flow'd,
As if even yet too much its surface show'd:
At once he started, stoop'd, around him strewn
The winter floods had scatter'd heaps of stone;
Of these the heaviest thence he gather'd there,
And slung them with a more than common care.
Meantime the Serf had crept to where unseen
Himself might safely mark what this might mean;
He caught a glimpse, as of a floating breast,
And something glitter'd starlike on the vest,
But ere he well could mark the buoyant trunk,
A massy fragment smote it, and it sunk:
It rose again, but indistinct to view,
And left the waters of a purple hue,
Then deeply disappear'd: the horseman gazed
Till ebb'd the latest eddy it had raised;
Then turning, vaulted on his pawing steed,
And instant spurr'd him into panting speed.
His face was mask'd—the features of the dead,
If dead it were, escaped the observer's dread;
But if in sooth a star its bosom bore,
Such is the badge that knighthood ever wore,
And such 'tis known Sir Ezzelin had worn
Upon the night that led to such a morn.
If thus he perish'd, Heaven receive his soul!
His undiscover'd limbs to ocean roll;
And charity upon the hope would dwell
It was not Lara's hand by which he fell.

XXV.

And Kaled—Lara—Ezzelin, are gone,
Alike without their monumental stone!
The first, all efforts vainly strove to wean
From lingering where her chieftain's blood had been;
Grief had so tamed a spirit once too proud,
Her tears were few, her wailing never loud;

looked towards the river, and seeing a mantle floating on the stream, he inquired what it was that appeared black; to which they answered, it was a mantle; and one of them threw stones upon it, in consequence of which it sunk. The attendants of the pontiff then inquired from Giorgio why he had not revealed this to the governor of the city; to which he replied, that he had seen in his time a hundred dead bodies thrown into the river at the same place, without any inquiry being made respecting them; and that he had not, therefore, considered it as a matter of any importance. The fishermen and seamen were then collected, and ordered to search the river, where, on the following evening, they found the body of the duke, with his habit entire, and thirty ducats in his purse. He was pierced with nine wounds, one of which was in his throat, the others in his head, body, and limbs. No sooner was the pontiff informed of the death of his son, and that he had been thrown, like filth, into the river, than, giving way to his grief, he shut himself up in a chamber, and wept bitterly. The Cardinal of Segovia, and other attendants on the pope, went to the door, and after many hours spent in persuasions and exhortations, prevailed upon him to admit them. From the evening of Wednesday till the following Saturday the pope took no food; nor did he sleep from Thursday morning till the same hour on the ensuing day. At length, however, giving way to the entreaties of his attendants, he began to restrain his sorrow, and to consider the injury which his own health might sustain by the further indulgence of his grief."—*Roscoe's Leo the Tenth*, vol. i. p. 265.

But furious would you tear her from the spot
Where yet she scarce believed that he was not,
Her eye shot forth with all the living fire
That haunts the tigress in her whelpless ire;
But left to waste her weary moments there,
She talk'd all idly unto shapes of air,
Such as the busy brain of Sorrow paints,
And wooes to listen to her fond complaints;
And she would sit beneath the very tree,
Where lay his drooping head upon her knee;
And in that posture where she saw him fall,
His words, his looks, his dying grasp recall;
And she had shorn, but saved her raven hair,
And oft would snatch it from her bosom there,
And fold and press it gently to the ground,
As if she stanch'd anew some phantom's wound.
Herself would question, and for him reply;
Then rising, start, and beckon him to fly
From some imagined spectre in pursuit;
Then seat her down upon some linden's root,
And hide her visage with her meagre hand,
Or trace strange characters along the sand.—
This could not last—she lies by him she loved;
Her tale untold—her truth too dearly proved.

THE GIAOUR:

A FRAGMENT OF A TURKISH TALE.

"One fatal remembrance—one sorrow that throws
Its bleak shade alike o'er our joys and our woes—
To which Life nothing darker nor brighter can bring,
For which joy hath no balm—and affliction no sting."—MOORE.

TO

SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.,

AS A SLIGHT BUT MOST SINCERE TOKEN OF ADMIRATION
FOR HIS GENIUS,
RESPECT FOR HIS CHARACTER,
AND GRATITUDE FOR HIS FRIENDSHIP,
THIS PRODUCTION IS INSCRIBED
BY HIS OBLIGED AND AFFECTIONATE SERVANT,
BYRON.

LONDON, May, 1812.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE tale which these disjointed fragments present, is founded upon circumstances now less common in the East than formerly; either because the ladies are more circumspect than in the "olden time," or because the Christians have better fortune, or less enterprise. The story, when entire, contained the adventures of a female slave, who was thrown, in the Mussulman manner, into the sea for infidelity, and avenged by a young Venetian, her lover, at the time the Seven Islands were possessed by the Republic of Venice, and soon after the Arnauts were beaten back from the Morea, which they had ravaged for some time subsequent to the Russian invasion. The desertion of the Maínotes, on being refused the plunder of Misitra, led to the abandonment of that enterprise, and to the desolation of the Morea, during which the cruelty exercised on all sides was unparalleled even in the annals of the Faithful.

THE GIAOUR.

No breath of air to break the wave
That rolls below the Athenian's grave,
That tomb which, gleaming o'er the cliff,*
First greets the homeward-veering skiff,
High o'er the land he saved in vain;
When shall such hero live again?

* * * * * *

Fair clime! where every season smiles
Benignant o'er those blessed isles,
Which, seen from far Colonna's height,
Make glad the heart that hails the sight,
And lend to loneliness delight.
There mildly dimpling, Ocean's check
Reflects the tints of many a peak
Caught by the laughing tides that lave
These Edens of the Eastern wave:
And if at times a transient breeze
Break the blue crystal of the seas,
Or sweep one blossom from the trees,
How welcome is each gentle air
That wakes and wafts the odors there!
For there—the Rose o'er crag or vale,
Sultana of the Nightingale,†
The maid for whom his melody,
His thousand songs are heard on high,
Blooms blushing to her lover's tale;
His queen, the garden queen, his Rose,
Unbent by winds, unchill'd by snows,
Far from the winters of the West,
By every breeze and season blest,
Returns the sweets by nature given
In softest incense back to heaven;
And grateful yields that smiling sky
Her fairest hue and fragrant sigh.
And many a summer flower is there,
And many a shade that love might share,
And many a grotto, meant for rest,
That holds the pirate for a guest;

* A tomb above the rocks on the promontory, by some supposed the sepulchre of Themistocles.

† The attachment of the nightingale to the rose is a well-known Persian fable. If I mistake not, the "Bulbul of a thousand tales" is one of his appellations.

Whose bark in sheltering cove below
Lurks for the passing peaceful prow,
Till the gay mariner's guitar*
Is heard, and seen the evening star;
Then stealing with the muffled oar,
Far shaded by the rocky shore,
Rush the night-prowlers on the prey,
And turn to groans his roundelay.
Strange—that when Nature loved to trace,
As if for gods, a dwelling-place,
And every charm and grace hath mix'd
Within the paradise she fix'd,
There man, enamor'd of distress,
Should mar it into wilderness,
And trample, brute-like, o'er each flower
That tasks not one laborious hour,
Nor claims the culture of his hand
To bloom along the fairy land,
But springs as to preclude his care,
And sweetly wooes him—but to spare:
Strange—that where all is peace beside,
There passion riots in her pride,
And lust and rapine wildly reign
To darken o'er the fair domain.
It is as though the fiends prevail'd
Against the seraphs they assail'd,
And, fix'd on heavenly thrones, should dwell
The freed inheritors of hell;
So soft the scene, so form'd for joy,
So curst the tyrants that destroy!

He who hath bent him o'er the dead
Ere the first day of death is fled,
The first dark day of nothingness,
The last of danger and distress,
(Before Decay's effacing fingers
Have swept the lines where beauty lingers,)
And mark'd the mild angelic air,
The rapture of repose that 's there,
The fix'd yet tender traits that streak
The languor of the placid cheek,
And—but for that sad shrouded eye,
That fires not, wins not, weeps not now,
And but for that chill, changeless brow,
Where cold Obstruction's apathy†
Appalls the gazing mourner's heart,
As if to him it could impart
The doom he dreads, yet dwells upon;
Yes, but for these and these alone,
Some moments, ay, one treacherous hour,
He still might doubt the tyrant's power;

* The guitar is the constant amusement of the Greek sailor by night: with a steady fair wind, and during a calm, it is accompanied always by the voice, and often by dancing.

† "Ay, but to die, and go we know not where,
To lie in cold obstruction."
Measure for Measure, Act III. Sc. 2.

So fair, so calm, so softly seal'd,
The first, last look by death reveal'd!*
Such is the aspect of this shore;
'Tis Greece, but living Greece no more!
So coldly sweet, so deadly fair,
We start, for soul is wanting there.
Hers is the loveliness in death,
That parts not quite with parting breath;
But beauty with that fearful bloom,
That hue which haunts it to the tomb,
Expression's last receding ray,
A gilded halo hovering round decay,
The farewell beam of Feeling pass'd away!
Spark of that flame, perchance of heavenly birth,
Which gleams, but warms no more its cherish'd earth!

Clime of the unforgotten brave!
Whose land from plain to mountain-cave
Was Freedom's home, or Glory's grave!
Shrine of the mighty! can it be
That this is all remains of thee?
Approach, thou craven crouching slave:
Say, is not this Thermopylæ?
These waters blue that round you lave,
O servile offspring of the free—
Pronounce what sea, what shore is this?
The gulf, the rock of Salamis!
These scenes, their story not unknown,
Arise, and make again your own;
Snatch from the ashes of your sires
The embers of their former fires;
And he who in the strife expires
Will add to theirs a name of fear
That Tyranny shall quake to hear,
And leave his sons a hope, a fame,
They too will rather die than shame:
For Freedom's battle once begun,
Bequeath'd by bleeding Sire to Son,
Though baffled oft is ever won.
Bear witness, Greece, thy living page
Attest it many a deathless age!
While kings, in dusty darkness hid,
Have left a nameless pyramid,
Thy heroes, though the general doom
Hath swept the column from their tomb,
A mightier monument command,
The mountains of their native land!
There points thy Muse to stranger's eye
The graves of those that cannot die!

* I trust that few of my readers have ever had an opportunity of witnessing what is here attempted in description; but those who have will probably retain a painful remembrance of that singular beauty which pervades, with few exceptions, the features of the dead, a few hours, and but for a few hours, after "the spirit is not there." It is to be remarked in cases of violent death by gun-shot wounds, the expression is always that of languor, whatever the natural energy of the sufferer's character: but in death from a stab, the countenance preserves its traits of feeling or ferocity, and the mind its bias, to the last.

'Twere long to tell, and sad to trace,
Each step from splendor to disgrace:
Enough—no foreign foe could quell
Thy soul, till from itself it fell;
Yes! Self-abasement paved the way
To villain-bonds and despot sway.

What can he tell who treads thy shore?
No legend of thine olden time,
No theme on which the Muse might soar,
High as thine own in days of yore,
When man was worthy of thy clime.
The hearts within thy valleys bred,
The fiery souls that might have led
Thy sons to deeds sublime,
Now crawl from cradle to the grave,
Slaves—nay, the bondsmen of a slave,*
And callous, save to crime;
Stain'd with each evil that pollutes
Mankind, where least above the brutes;
Without even savage virtue blest,
Without one free or valiant breast.
Still to the neighboring ports they waft
Proverbial wiles and ancient craft;
In this the subtle Greek is found,
For this, and this alone, renown'd.
In vain might Liberty invoke
The spirit to its bondage broke,
Or raise the neck that courts the yoke:
No more her sorrows I bewail,
Yet this will be a mournful tale,
And they who listen may believe,
Who heard it first had cause to grieve.

* * * * * *

Far, dark, along the blue sea glancing,
The shadows of the rocks advancing
Start on the fisher's eye like boat
Of island-pirate or Mainote;
And fearful for his light caique,
He shuns the near but doubtful creek:
Though worn and weary with his toil,
And cumber'd with his scaly spoil,
Slowly, yet strongly, plies the oar,
Till Port Leone's safer shore
Receives him by the lovely light
That best becomes an Eastern night.

* * * * * *

Who thundering comes on blackest steed,
With slacken'd bit and hoof of speed!
Beneath the clattering iron's sound
The cavern'd echoes wake around
In lash for lash, and bound for bound;

* Athens is the property of the Kislar Aga (the slave of the seraglio and guardian of the women), who appoints the Waywode. A pander and eunuch—these are not polite, yet true appellations—now *governs* the *governor* of Athens.

The foam that streaks the courser's side
Seems gather'd from the ocean-tide:
Though weary waves are sunk to rest,
There 's none within his rider's breast;
And though to-morrow's tempest lour,
'Tis calmer than thy heart, young Giaour! *
I know thee not, I loathe thy race,
But in thy lineaments I trace
What time shall strengthen, not efface:
Though young and pale, that sallow front
Is scathed by fiery passion's brunt;
Though bent on earth thine evil eye,
As meteor-like thou glidest by,
Right well I view and deem thee one
Whom Othman's sons should slay or shun.

On—on he hasten'd, and he drew
My gaze of wonder as he flew:
Though like a demon of the night
He pass'd, and vanish'd from my sight,
His aspect and his air impress'd
A troubled memory on my breast,
And long upon my startled ear
Rung his dark courser's hoofs of fear.
He spurs his steed; he nears the steep,
That, jutting, shadows o'er the deep;
He winds around; he hurries by;
The rock relieves him from mine eye;
For well I ween unwelcome he
Whose glance is fix'd on those that flee;
And not a star but shines too bright
On him who takes such timeless flight.
He wound along; but ere he pass'd
One glance he snatch'd, as if his last,
A moment check'd his wheeling steed,
A moment breathed him from his speed,
A moment on his stirrup stood—
Why looks he o'er the olive wood?
The crescent glimmers on the hill.
The Mosque's high lamps are quivering still:
Though too remote for sound to wake
In echoes of the far tophaike,†
The flashes of each joyous peal
Are seen to prove the Moslem's zeal.
To-night, set Rhamazani's sun;
To-night, the Bairam feast 's begun;
To-night—but who and what art thou
Of foreign garb and fearful brow?
And what are these to thine or thee,
That thou shouldst either pause or flee?

He stood—some dread was on his face,
Soon Hatred settled in its place:

* Infidel.
† "Tophaike," musket.—The Bairam is announced by the cannon at sunset; the illumination of the mosques, and the firing of all kinds of small arms, loaded with *ball*, proclaim it during the night.

It rose not with the reddening flush
Of transient Anger's hasty blush,
But pale as marble o'er the tomb,
Whose ghastly whiteness aids its gloom.
His brow was bent, his eye was glazed;
He raised his arm, and fiercely raised,
And sternly shook his hand on high,
As doubting to return or fly:
Impatient of his flight delay'd,
Here loud his raven charger neigh'd—
Down glanced that hand, and grasp'd his blade;
That sound had burst his waking dream,
As Slumber starts at owlet's scream.
The spur hath lanced his courser's sides;
Away, away, for life he rides:
Swift as the hurl'd on high jerreed *
Springs to the touch his startled steed;
The rock is doubled, and the shore
Shakes with the clattering tramp no more;
The crag is won, no more is seen
His Christian crest and haughty mien.
'Twas but an instant he restrain'd
That fiery barb so sternly rein'd;
'Twas but a moment that he stood,
Then sped as if by death pursued:
But in that instant o'er his soul
Winters of Memory seem'd to roll,
And gather in that drop of time
A life of pain, an age of crime.
O'er him who loves, or hates, or fears,
Such moment pours the grief of years:
What felt *he* then, at once opprest
By all that most distracts the breast?
That pause, which ponder'd o'er his fate,
Oh, who its dreary length shall date!
Though in Time's record nearly nought,
It was Eternity to Thought!
For infinite as boundless space
The thought that Conscience must embrace,
Which in itself can comprehend
Woe without name, or hope, or end.

The hour is past, the Giaour is gone;
And did he fly or fall alone?
Woe to that hour he came or went!
The curse for Hassan's sin was sent
To turn a palace to a tomb:
He came, he went, like the Simoom,†
That harbinger of fate and gloom,

* Jerreed, or Djerrid, a blunted Turkish javelin, which is darted from horseback with great force and precision. It is a favorite exercise of the Mussulmans; but I know not if it can be called a *manly* one, since the most expert in the art are the black eunuchs of Constantinople. I think, next to these, a Mamlouk at Smyrna was the most skilful that came within my observation.

† The blast of the desert, fatal to everything living, and often alluded to in Eastern poetry.

Beneath whose widely-wasting breath
The very cypress droops to death—
Dark tree, still sad when others' grief is fled,
The only constant mourner o'er the dead!

The steed is vanish'd from the stall;
No serf is seen in Hassan's hall;
The lonely Spider's thin gray pall
Waves slowly widening o'er the wall;
The Bat builds in his Harem bower,
And in the fortress of his power
The Owl usurps the beacon-tower;
The wild-dog howls o'er the fountain's brim,
With baffled thirst, and famine, grim;
For the stream has shrunk from its marble bed,
Where the weeds and the desolate dust are spread.
'Twas sweet of yore to see it play
And chase the sultriness of day,
As springing high the silver dew
In whirls fantastically flew,
And flung luxurious coolness round
The air, and verdure o'er the ground.
'Twas sweet, when cloudless stars were bright,
To view the wave of watery light,
And hear its melody by night.
And oft had Hassan's Childhood play'd
Around the verge of that cascade;
And oft upon his mother's breast
That sound had harmonized his rest;
And oft had Hassan's Youth along
Its bank been soothed by Beauty's song;
And softer seem'd each melting tone
Of Music mingled with its own.
But ne'er shall Hassan's Age repose
Along the brink at Twilight's close:
The stream that fill'd that font is fled—
The blood that warm'd his heart is shed!
And here no more shall human voice
Be heard to rage, regret, rejoice.
The last sad note that swell'd the gale
Was woman's wildest funeral wail:
That quench'd in silence, all is still,
But the lattice that flaps when the wind is shrill;
Though raves the gust, and floods the rain,
No hand shall close its clasp again.
On desert sands 'twere joy to scan
The rudest steps of fellow-man,
So here the very voice of Grief
Might wake an Echo like relief—
At least 'twould say, "All are not gone;
There lingers Life, though but in one"—
For many a gilded chamber's there,
Which Solitude might well forbear;
Within that dome as yet Decay
Hath slowly work'd her cankering way—
But gloom is gather'd o'er the gate,

Nor there the Fakir's self will wait:
Nor there will wandering Dervise stay,
For bounty cheers not his delay;
Nor there will weary stranger halt
To bless the sacred "bread and salt."*
Alike must Wealth and Poverty
Pass heedless and unheeded by,
For Courtesy and Pity died
With Hassan on the mountain side.
His roof, that refuge unto men,
Is Desolation's hungry den.
The guest flies the hall, and the vassal from labor,
Since his turban was cleft by the Infidel's sabre!†

. . . . . .

I hear the sound of coming feet,
But not a voice mine ear to greet;
More near—each turban I can scan,
And silver-sheathed ataghan;‡
The foremost of the band is seen
An Emir by his garb of green: §
"Ho! who art thou?"—"This low salam ‖
Replies of Moslem faith I am."
"The burden ye so gently bear
Seems one that claims your utmost care,
And, doubtless, holds some precious freight,
My humble bark would gladly wait."
"Thou speakest sooth; thy skiff unmoor,
And waft us from the silent shore;
Nay, leave the sail still furl'd, and ply
The nearest oar that's scatter'd by,
And midway to those rocks where sleep
The channel'd waters dark and deep.
Rest from your task—so—bravely done,
Our course has been right swiftly run;
Yet 'tis the longest voyage, I trow
That one of—"

. . . . . .

Sullen it plunged, and slowly sank,
The calm wave rippled to the bank;
I watch'd it as it sank: methought
Some motion from the current caught

* To partake of food, to break bread and salt with your host, insures the safety of the guest: even though an enemy, his person from that moment is sacred.

† I need hardly observe, that Charity and Hospitality are the first duties enjoined by Mohammed, and, to say truth, very generally practised by his disciples. The first praise that can be bestowed on a chief, is a panegyric on his bounty; the next, on his valor.

‡ The ataghan, a long dagger worn with pistols in the belt, in a metal scabbard, generally of silver; and, among the wealthier, gilt, or of gold.

§ Green is the privileged color of the Prophet's numerous pretended descendants; with them, as here, faith (the family inheritance) is supposed to supersede the necessity of good works: they are the worst of a very indifferent brood.

‖ "Salam aleikoum! aleikoum salam!"—"Peace be with you; be with you peace,"—the salutation reserved for the Faithful:—to a Christian, "Urlarula!"—"A good journey;" or, "Saban hiresem, saban serula"—"Good morn, good even;" and sometimes, "May your end be happy,"—are the usual salutes.

Bestirr'd it more,—'twas but the beam
That chequer'd o'er the living stream:
I gazed, till vanishing from view,
Like lessening pebble it withdrew;
Still less and less, a speck of white
That gemm'd the tide, then mock'd the sight;
And all its hidden secrets sleep,
Known but to Genii of the deep,
Which, trembling in their coral caves,
They dare not whisper to the waves.

. . . . .

As rising on its purple wing
The insect-queen of Eastern spring,*
O'er emerald meadows of Cashmere
Invites the young pursuer near,
And leads him on from flower to flower
A weary chase and wasted hour,
Then leaves him, as it soars on high,
With panting heart and tearful eye:
So Beauty lures the full-grown child,
With hue as bright, and wing as wild;
A chase of idle hopes and fears,
Begun in folly, closed in tears.
If won, to equal ills betray'd,
Woe waits the insect and the maid;
A life of pain, the loss of peace,
From infant's play, and man's caprice:
The lovely toy so fiercely sought
Hath lost its charm by being caught,
For every touch that woo'd its stay
Hath brush'd its brightest hues away,
Till charm, and hue, and beauty gone,
'Tis left to fly or fall alone.
With wounded wing, or bleeding breast,
Ah! where shall either victim rest?
Can this with faded pinion soar
From rose to tulip as before?
Or Beauty, blighted in an hour,
Find joy within her broken bower;
No: gayer insects fluttering by
Ne'er droop the wing o'er those that die,
And lovelier things have mercy shown
To every failing but their own,
And every woe a tear can claim
Except an erring sister's shame.

. . . . .

The Mind, that broods o'er guilty woes,
Is like the Scorpion girt by fire,
In circle narrowing as it glows,
The flames around their captive close,
Till inly scarch'd by thousand throes,
And maddening in her ire,
One sad and sole relief she knows,
The sting she nourish'd for her foes,

* The blue-winged butterfly of Cashmere, the most rare and beautiful of the species.

Whose venom never yet was vain,
Gives but one pang, and cures all pain,
And darts into her desperate brain:
So do the dark in soul expire,
Or live like Scorpion girt by fire; *
So writhes the mind Remorse hath riven,
Unfit for earth, undoom'd for heaven,
Darkness above, despair beneath,
Around it flame, within it death!

. . . . .

Black Hassan from the Harem flies,
Nor bends on woman's form his eyes;
The unwonted chase each hour employs,
Yet shares he not the hunter's joys.
Not thus was Hassan wont to fly
When Leila dwelt in his Serai.
Doth Leila there no longer dwell?
That tale can only Hassan tell:
Strange rumors in our city say
Upon that eve she fled away
When Rhamazan's last sun was set,†
And flashing from each minaret
Millions of lamps proclaim'd the feast
Of Bairam through the boundless East.
'Twas then she went as to the bath,
Which Hassan vainly search'd in wrath:
For she was flown her master's rage
In likeness of a Georgian page,
And far beyond the Moslem's power
Had wrong'd him with the faithless Giaour.
Somewhat of this had Hassan deem'd:
But still so fond, so fair she seem'd,
Too well he trusted to the slave
Whose treachery deserved a grave:
And on that eve had gone to mosque,
And thence to feast in his kiosk.
Such is the tale his Nubians tell,
Who did not watch their charge too well;
But others say, that on that night,
By pale Phingari's trembling light,‡
The Giaour upon his jet-black steed
Was seen, but seen alone, to speed
With bloody spur along the shore,
Nor maid nor page behind him bore.

. . . . . .

Her eye's dark charm 'twere vain to tell,
But gaze on that of the Gazelle,
It will assist thy fancy well:

* Alluding to the dubious suicide of the scorpion, so placed for experiment by gentle philosophers. Some maintain that the position of the sting, when turned towards the head, is merely a convulsive movement; but others have actually brought in the verdict, "Felo de se." The scorpions are surely interested in a speedy decision of the question; as, if once fairly established as insect Catos, they will probably be allowed to live as long as they think proper, without being martyred for the sake of an hypothesis.

† The cannon at sunset close the Rhamazan. See page 75, note †

‡ The moon.

As large, as languishingly dark,
But Soul beam'd forth in every spark
That darted from beneath the lid,
Bright as the jewel of Giamschid.*
Yea, *Soul*, and should our Prophet say
That form was nought but breathing clay,
By Allah! I would answer nay;
Though on Al-Sirat's arch I stood,†
Which totters o'er the fiery flood,
With Paradise within my view,
And all his Houris beckoning through.
Oh! who young Leila's glance could read
And keep that portion of his creed,
Which saith that woman is but dust,
A soulless toy for tyrant's lust? ‡
On her might Muftis gaze, and own
That through her eye the Immortal shone;
On her fair cheek's unfading hue
The young pomegranate's blossoms strew§
Their bloom in blushes ever new:
Her hair in hyacinthine flow, ‖
When left to roll its folds below,
As 'midst her handmaids in the hall
She stood superior to them all,
Hath swept the marble where her feet
Gleam'd whiter than the mountain sleet,
Ere from the cloud that gave it birth
It fell, and caught one stain of earth.
The cygnet nobly walks the water:
So moved on earth Circassia's daughter,
The loveliest bird of Franguestan! ¶

As rears her crest the ruffled Swan,
And spurns the wave with wings of pride,
When pass the steps of stranger man
Along the banks that bound her tide;
Thus rose fair Leila's whiter neck:—
Thus arm'd with beauty would she check

* The celebrated fabulous ruby of Sultan Giamschid, the embellisher of Istakhar; from its splendor, named Schebgerag, "The Torch of Night;" also, "The Cup of the Sun," &c. In the first edition, "Giamschid" was written as a word of three syllables; so D'Herbelot has it; but I am told Richardson reduces it to a dissyllable, and writes "Jamschid." I have left in the text the orthography of the one with the pronunciation of the other.

† Al-Sirat, the bridge of breadth less than the thread of a famished spider, over which the Mussulmans must *skate* into Paradise, to which it is the only entrance; but this is not the worst, the river beneath being hell itself, into which, as may be expected, the unskilful and tender of foot contrive to tumble with a "facilis descensus Averni," not very pleasing in prospect to the next passenger. There is a shorter cut downwards to the Jews and Christians.

‡ A vulgar error: the Koran allots at least a third of Paradise to well-behaved women; but by far the greater number of Mussulmans interpret the text their own way, and exclude their moieties from heaven. Being enemies to Platonics, they cannot discern "any fitness of things" in the souls of the other sex, conceiving them to be superseded by the Houris.

§ An Oriental simile, which may, perhaps, though fairly stolen, be deemed "plus Arabe qu'en Arabie."

‖ Hyacinthine, in Arabic "Sunbul;" as common a thought in the Eastern poets as it was among the Greeks.

¶ Circassia.

Intrusion's glance, till Folly's gaze
Shrunk from the charms it meant to praise:
Thus high and graceful was her gait;
Her heart as tender to her mate;
Her mate—stern Hassan, who was he?
Alas! that name was not for thee!

. . . . .

Stern Hassan hath a journey ta'en
With twenty vassals in his train,
Each arm'd, as best becomes a man,
With arquebuse and ataghan;
The chief before, as deck'd for war,
Bears in his belt the scimitar
Stain'd with the best of Arnaut blood,
When in the pass the rebels stood,
And few return'd to tell the tale
Of what befell in Parne's vale.
The pistols which his girdle bore
Were those that once a pacha wore,
Which still, though gemm'd and boss'd with gold,
Even robbers tremble to behold.
'Tis said he goes to woo a bride
More true than her who left his side;
The faithless slave that broke her bower,
And, worse than faithless, for a Giaour!

. . . . . .

The sun's last rays are on the hill,
And sparkle in the fountain rill,
Whose welcome waters, cool and clear,
Draw blessings from the mountaineer;
Here may the loitering merchant Greek
Find that repose 'twere vain to seek
In cities lodged too near his lord,
And trembling for his secret hoard—
Here may he rest where none can see,
In crowds a slave, in deserts free;
And with forbidden wine may stain
The bowl a Moslem must not drain.

. . . . . .

The foremost Tartar's in the gap,
Conspicuous by his yellow cap;
The rest in lengthening line the while
Wind slowly through the long defile:
Above, the mountain rears a peak,
Where vultures whet the thirsty beak;
And theirs may be a feast to-night,
Shall tempt them down ere morrow's light;
Beneath, a river's wintry stream
Has shrunk before the summer beam,
And left a channel bleak and bare,
Save shrubs that spring to perish there:
Each side the midway path there lay
Small broken crags of granite gray,
By time, or mountain lightning, riven
From summits clad in mists of heaven;

For where is he that hath beheld
The peak of Liakura unveil'd?

. . . . . .

They reach the grove of pine at last:
"Bismillah! now the peril's past;*
For yonder view the opening plain,
And there we'll prick our steeds amain:"
The Chiaus spake, and as he said,
A bullet whistled o'er his head;
The foremost Tartar bites the ground!
Scarce had they time to check the rein,
Swift from their steeds the riders bound;
But three shall never mount again:
Unseen the foes that gave the wound,
The dying ask revenge in vain.
With steel unsheath'd, and carbine bent,
Some o'er their courser's harness leant,
Half shelter'd by the steed;
Some fly behind the nearest rock,
And there await the coming shock,
Nor tamely stand to bleed
Beneath the shaft of foes unseen,
Who dare not quit their craggy screen.
Stern Hassan only from his horse
Disdains to light, and keeps his course,
Till fiery flashes in the van
Proclaim too sure the robber-clan
Have well secured the only way
Could now avail the promised prey;
Then curl'd his very beard with ire,†
And glared his eye with fiercer fire:
"Though far and near the bullets hiss,
I've 'scaped a bloodier hour than this."
And now the foe their covert quit,
And call his vassals to submit;
But Hassan's frown and furious word
Are dreaded more than hostile sword,
Nor of his little band a man
Resign'd carbine or ataghan,
Nor raised the craven cry, Amaun! ‡
In fuller sight, more near and near,
The lately ambush'd foes appear,
And, issuing from the grove, advance
Some who on battle-charger prance.
Who leads them on with foreign brand,
Far flashing in his red right hand?
"'Tis he! 'tis he! I know him now;
I know him by his pallid brow;

* Bismillah—"In the name of God;" the commencement of all the chapters of the Koran but one, and of prayers and thanksgivings.

† A phenomenon not uncommon with an angry Mussulman. In 1809, the Capitan Pacha's whiskers at a diplomatic audience were no less lively with indignation than a tiger-cat's, to the horror of all the dragomans; the portentous mustachios twisted, they stood erect of their own accord, and were expected every moment to change their color, but at last condescended to subside, which probably saved more heads than they contained hairs.

‡ "Amaun," quarter, pardon.

I know him by the evil eye *
That aids his envious treachery;
I know him by his jet-black barb:
Though now array'd in Arnaut garb,
Apostate from his own vile faith,
It shall not save him from the death:
'Tis he! well met in any hour,
Lost Leila's love, accursed Giaour!"

As rolls the river into ocean,
In sable torrent wildly streaming;
As the sea-tide's opposing motion,
In azure column proudly gleaming,
Beats back the current many a rood,
In curling foam and mingling flood,
While eddying whirl, and breaking wave,
Roused by the blasts of winter, rave;
Through sparkling spray, in thundering clash,
The lightnings of the waters flash
In awful whiteness o'er the shore,
That shines and shakes beneath the roar;
Thus—as the stream and ocean greet,
With waves that madden as they meet—
Thus join the bands, whom mutual wrong,
And fate, and fury, drive along.
The bickering sabres' shivering jar;
And pealing wide or ringing near
Its echoes on the throbbing ear,
The death-shot hissing from afar;
The shock, the shout, the groan of war,
Reverberate along that vale,
More suited to the shepherd's tale:
Though few the numbers—theirs the strife,
That neither spares nor speaks for life!
Ah! fondly youthful hearts can press,
To seize and share the dear caress;
But Love itself could never pant
For all that Beauty sighs to grant,
With half the fervor Hate bestows
Upon the last embrace of foes,
When grappling in the fight they fold
Those arms that ne'er shall lose their hold:
Friends meet to part; Love laughs at faith;
True foes, once met, are join'd till death!

. . . . . .

With sabre shiver'd to the hilt,
Yet dripping with the blood he spilt;
Yet strain'd within the sever'd hand
Which quivers round that faithless brand;
His turban far behind him roll'd,
And cleft in twain its firmest fold;
His flowing robe by falchion torn,
And crimson as those clouds of morn

* The "evil eye," a common superstition in the Levant, and of which the imaginary effects are yet very singular on those who conceive themselves affected.

That, streak'd with dusky red, portend
The day shall have a stormy end;
A stain on every bush that bore
A fragment of his palampore,*
His breast with wounds unnumber'd riven,
His back to earth, his face to heaven,
Fall'n Hassan lies—his unclosed eye
Yet louring on his enemy,
As if the hour that seal'd his fate
Surviving left his quenchless hate;
And o'er him bends that foe, with brow
As dark as his that bled below.—

. . . . . .

"Yes, Leila sleeps beneath the wave,
But his shall be a redder grave;
Her spirit pointed well the steel
Which taught that felon heart to feel.
He call'd the Prophet, but his power
Was vain against the vengeful Giaour:
He call'd on Allah—but the word
Arose unheeded or unheard.
Thou Paynim fool! could Leila's prayer
Be pass'd, and thine accorded there?
I watch'd my time, I leagued with these,
The traitor in his turn to seize;
My wrath is wreak'd, the deed is done,
And now I go—but go alone."

. . . . . .

The browsing camels' bells are tinkling:
His Mother look'd from her lattice high—
She saw the dews of eve besprinkling
The pasture green beneath her eye,
She saw the planets faintly twinkling:
"'Tis twilight—sure his train is nigh."
She could not rest in the garden-bower,
But gazed through the grate of his steepest tower:
"Why comes he not? his steeds are fleet,
Nor shrink they from the summer heat;
Why sends not the Bridegroom his promised gift?
Is his heart more cold, or his barb less swift?
Oh, false reproach! yon Tartar now
Has gain'd our nearest mountain's brow,
And warily the steep descends,
And now within the valley bends;
And he bears the gift at his saddle-bow—
How could I deem his courser slow?
Right well my largess shall repay
His welcome speed, and weary way."

The Tartar lighted at the gate,
But scarce upheld his fainting weight;
His swarthy visage spake distress,
But this might be from weariness;

* The flowered shawls generally worn by persons of rank.

His garb with sanguine spots was dyed,
But these might be from his courser's side;
He drew the token from his vest—
Angel of death! 'tis Hassan's cloven crest!
His calpac* rent—his caftan red—
"Lady, a fearful bride thy Son hath wed:
Me, not from mercy, did they spare,
But this empurpled pledge to bear.
Peace to the brave! whose blood is spilt:
Woe to the Giaour! for his the guilt."

. . . . . .

A turban carved in coarsest stone,†
A pillar with rank weeds o'ergrown,
Whereon can now be scarcely read
The Koran verse that mourns the dead,
Point out the spot where Hassan fell
A victim in that lonely dell.
There sleeps as true an Osmanlie
As e'er at Mecca bent the knee;
As ever scorn'd forbidden wine,
Or pray'd with face towards the shrine,
In orisons resumed anew
At solemn sound of "Allah Hu!"‡
Yet died he by a stranger's hand,
And stranger in his native land;
Yet died he as in arms he stood,
And unavenged, at least in blood.
But him the maids of Paradise
Impatient to their halls invite,
And the dark Heaven of Houris' eyes
On him shall glance for ever bright;
They come—their kerchiefs green they wave,§
And welcome with a kiss the brave!
Who falls in battle 'gainst a Giaour
Is worthiest an immortal bower.

. . . . . .

But thou, false Infidel! shalt writhe
Beneath avenging Monkir's scythe;‖

* The calpac is the solid or centre part of the head-dress; the shawl is wound round it, and forms the turban.

† The turban, pillar, and inscriptive verse, decorate the tombs of the Osmanlies, whether in the cemetery or the wilderness. In the mountains you frequently pass similar mementos; and on inquiry you are informed that they record some victim of rebellion, plunder, or revenge.

‡ "Allah Hu!" the concluding words of the Muezzin's call to prayer from the highest gallery on the exterior of the minaret. On a still evening, when the Muezzin has a fine voice, which is frequently the case, the effect is solemn and beautiful beyond all the bells in Christendom.

§ The following is part of a battle-song of the Turks:—"I see—I see a dark-eyed girl of Paradise, and she waves a handkerchief, a kerchief of green; and cries aloud, 'Come, kiss me, for I love thee,'" &c.

‖ Monkir and Nekir are the inquisitors of the dead, before whom the corpse undergoes a slight novitiate and preparatory training for damnation. If the answers are none of the clearest, he is hauled up with a scythe and thumped down with a red-hot mace till properly seasoned, with a variety of subsidiary probations. The office of these angels is no sinecure; there are but two, and the number of orthodox deceased being in a small proportion to the remainder, their hands are always full.

And from its torment 'scape alone
To wander round lost Eblis' throne;*
And fire unquench'd, unquenchable,
Around, within, thy heart shall dwell;
Nor ear can hear nor tongue can tell
The tortures of that inward hell!
But first, on earth as Vampire sent,†
Thy corse shall from its tomb be rent:
Then ghastly haunt thy native place,
And suck the blood of all thy race:
There from thy daughter, sister, wife,
At midnight drain the stream of life;
Yet loathe the banquet which perforce
Must feed thy livid living corse:
Thy victims ere they yet expire
Shall know the demon for their sire,
As cursing thee, thou cursing them,
Thy flowers are wither'd on the stem.
But one that for thy crime must fall,
The youngest, most beloved of all,
Shall bless thee with a *father's* name—
That word shall wrap thy heart in flame!
Yet must thou end thy task, and mark
Her cheek's last tinge, her eye's last spark,
And the last glassy glance must view
Which freezes o'er its lifeless blue;
Then with unhallow'd hand shalt tear
The tresses of her yellow hair,
Of which in life a lock when shorn
Affection's fondest pledge was worn;
But now is borne away by thee,
Memorial of thine agony!
Wet with thine own best blood shall drip‡
Thy gnashing tooth and haggard lip;
Then stalking to thy sullen grave,
Go—and with Ghouls and Afrits rave;
Till these in horror shrink away
From spectre more accursed than they!

. . . . . .

"How name ye yon lone Caloyer?
His features I have scann'd before
In mine own land: 'tis many a year,
Since, dashing by the lonely shore,
I saw him urge as fleet a steed
As ever served a horseman's need.

* Eblis, the Oriental Prince of Darkness.

† The Vampire superstition is still general in the Levant. Honest Tournefort tells a long story, which Mr. Southey, in his notes on "Thalaba," quotes, about these "Vroucolochas," as he calls them. The Romaic term is "Vardoulacha." I recollect a whole family being terrified by the scream of a child, which they imagined must proceed from such a visitation. The Greeks never mention the word without horror. I find that "Broucolokas" is an old legitimate Hellenic appellation—at least is so applied to Arsenius, who, according to the Greeks, was after his death animated by the devil.—The moderns, however, use the word I mention.

‡ The freshness of the face, and the wetness of the lip with blood, are the never-failing signs of a Vampire. The stories told in Hungary and Greece of these foul feeders are singular, and some of them most *incredibly* attested.

But once I saw that face, yet then
It was so mark'd with inward pain,
I could not pass it by again;
It breathes the same dark spirit now,
As death were stamp'd upon his brow."
"'Tis twice three years at summer tide
Since first among our frères he came;
And here it soothes him to abide
For some dark deed he will not name.
But never at our vesper prayer,
Nor e'er before confession chair
Kneels he, nor recks he when arise
Incense or anthem to the skies;
But broods within his cell alone,
His faith and race alike unknown.
The sea from Paynim land he crost,
And here ascended from the coast;
Yet seems he not of Othman race,
But only Christian in his face:
I'd judge him some stray renegade,
Repentant of the change he made,
Save that he shuns our holy shrine,
Nor tastes the sacred bread and wine.
Great largess to these walls he brought,
And thus our abbot's favor bought;
But were I prior, not a day
Should brook such stranger's further stay,
Or pent within our penance cell
Should doom him there for aye to dwell.
Much in his visions mutters he
Of maiden whelm'd beneath the sea:
Of sabres clashing, foemen flying,
Wrongs avenged, and Moslem dying.
On cliff he hath been known to stand,
And rave as to some bloody hand,
Fresh sever'd from its parent limb,
Invisible to all but him,
Which beckons onward to his grave,
And lures to leap into the wave."

. . . . . .

Dark and unearthly is the scowl
That glares beneath his dusky cowl:
The flash of that dilating eye
Reveals too much of times gone by;
Though varying, indistinct its hue,
Oft will his glance the gazer rue,
For in it lurks that nameless spell,
Which speaks, itself unspeakable,
A spirit yet unquell'd and high,
That claims and keeps ascendancy;
And like the bird whose pinions quake,
But cannot fly the gazing snake,
Will others quail beneath his look,
Nor 'scape the glance they scarce can brook.
From him the half-affrighted Friar
When met alone would fain retire,

As if that eye and bitter smile
Transferr'd to others fear and guile:
Not oft to smile descendeth he,
And when he doth 'tis sad to see
That he but mocks at Misery.
How that pale lip will curl and quiver!
Then fix once more as if for ever;
As if his sorrow or disdain
Forbade him e'er to smile again.
Well were it so—such ghastly mirth
From joyance ne'er derived its birth.
But sadder still it were to trace
What once were feelings in that face;
Time hath not yet the features fix'd,
But brighter traits with evil mix'd;
And there are hues not always faded,
Which speak a mind not all degraded,
Even by the crimes through which it waded.
The common crowd but see the gloom
Of wayward deeds, and fitting doom;
The close observer can espy
A noble soul, and lineage high:
Alas! though both bestow'd in vain,
Which Grief could change, and Guilt could stain.
It was no vulgar tenement
To which such lofty gifts were lent,
And still with little less than dread
On such the sight is riveted.
The roofless cot, decay'd and rent,
Will scarce delay the passer-by;
The tower by war or tempest bent,
While yet may frown one battlement,
Demands and daunts the stranger's eye;
Each ivied arch, and pillar lone,
Pleads haughtily for glories gone!

"His floating robe around him folding,
Slow sweeps he through the column'd aisle;
With dread behold, with gloom beholding
The rites that sanctify the pile.
But when the anthem shakes the choir,
And kneel the monks, his steps retire;
By yonder lone and wavering torch
His aspect glares within the porch;
There will he pause till all is done—
And hear the prayer, but utter none.
See—by the half-illumined wall
His hood fly back, his dark hair fall,
That pale brow wildly wreathing round,
As if the Gorgon there had bound
The sablest of the serpent-braid
That o'er her fearful forehead stray'd;
For he declines the convent oath,
And leaves those locks' unhallow'd growth,
But wears our garb in all beside;
And, not from piety but pride,

Gives wealth to walls that never heard
Of his one holy vow nor word.
Lo!—mark ye, as the harmony
Peals louder praises to the sky,
That livid cheek, that stony air
Of mix'd defiance and despair!
Saint Francis, keep him from the shrine!
Else may we dread the wrath divine
Made manifest by awful sign.
If ever evil angel bore
The form of mortal, such he wore:
By all my hope of sins forgiven,
Such looks are not of earth nor heaven!"

To love the softest hearts are prone,
But such can ne'er be all his own;
Too timid in his woes to share,
Too meek to meet, or brave despair:
And sterner hearts alone may feel
The wound that time can never heal.
The rugged metal of the mine
Must burn before its surface shine,
But plunged within the furnace-flame,
It bends and melts—though still the same;
Then, temper'd to thy want, or will,
'Twill serve thee to defend or kill:
A breastplate for thine hour of need,
Or blade to bid thy foeman bleed;
But if a dagger's form it bear,
Let those who shape its edge, beware!
Thus passion's fire, and woman's art,
Can turn and tame the sterner heart;
From these its form and tone are ta'en,
And what they make it, must remain,
But break—before it bend again.

. . . . .

If solitude succeed to grief,
Release from pain is slight relief;
The vacant bosom's wilderness
Might thank the pang that made it less.
We loathe what none are left to share:
Even bliss—'twere woe alone to bear;
The heart once left thus desolate
Must fly at once for ease to hate.
It is as if the dead could feel
The icy worm around them steal,
And shudder, as the reptiles creep
To revel o'er their rotting sleep,
Without the power to scare away
The cold consumers of their clay!
It is as if the desert-bird,*
Whose beak unlocks her bosom's stream
To still her famish'd nestlings' scream,
Nor mourns a life to them transferr'd,

* The pelican is, I believe, the bird so libelled, by the imputation of feeding her chickens with her blood.

Should rend her rash devoted breast,
And find them flown her empty nest.
The keenest pangs the wretched find
  Are rapture to the dreary void,
The leafless desert of the mind,
  The waste of feelings unemploy'd.
Who would be doom'd to gaze upon
A sky without a cloud or sun!
Less hideous far the tempest's roar
Than ne'er to brave the billows more—
Thrown, when the war of winds is o'er,
A lonely wreck on fortune's shore,
'Mid sullen calm, and silent bay,
Unseen to drop by dull decay;—
Better to sink beneath the shock
Than moulder piecemeal on the rock!

. . . . . .

"Father! thy days have pass'd in peace,
  'Mid counted beads, and countless prayer;
To bid the sins of others cease,
  Thyself without a crime or care,
Save transient ills that all must bear,
Has been thy lot from youth to age;
And thou wilt bless thee from the rage
Of passions fierce and uncontroll'd,
Such as thy penitents unfold,
Whose secret sins and sorrows rest
Within thy pure and pitying breast.
My days, though few, have pass'd below
In much of joy, but more of woe;
Yet still, in hours of love or strife,
I've 'scaped the weariness of life:
Now leagued with friends, now girt by foes,
I loathed the languor of repose.
Now nothing left to love or hate,
No more with hope or pride elate,
I'd rather be the thing that crawls
Most noxious o'er a dungeon's walls,
Than pass my dull, unvarying days,
Condemn'd to meditate and gaze.
Yet, lurks a wish within my breast
For rest—but not to feel 'tis rest.
Soon shall my fate that wish fulfil:
  And I shall sleep without the dream
Of what I was, and would be still,
  Dark as to thee my deeds may seem:
My memory now is but the tomb
Of joys long dead; my hope, their doom:
Though better to have died with those
Than bear a life of lingering woes.
My spirit shrunk not to sustain
The searching throes of ceaseless pain;
Nor sought the self-accorded grave
Of ancient fool and modern knave:
Yet death I have not fear'd to meet;
And in the field it had been sweet,

Had danger woo'd me on to move
The slave of glory, not of love.
I've braved it—not for honor's boast;
I smile at laurels won or lost;
To such let others carve their way,
For high renown, or hireling pay:
But place again before my eyes
Aught that I deem a worthy prize;
The maid I love, the man I hate,
And I will hunt the steps of fate,
To save or slay, as these require,
Through rending steel, and rolling fire:
Nor need'st thou doubt this speech from one
Who would but do—what he *hath* done.
Death is but what the haughty brave,
The weak must bear, the wretch must crave;
Then let Life go to Him who gave;
I have not quail'd to danger's brow
When high and happy—need I *now?*

. . . . . .

"I loved her, Friar! nay, adored—
But these are words that all can use—
I proved it more in deed than word;
There's blood upon that dinted sword,
A stain its steel can never lose:
'Twas shed for her, who died for me,
It warm'd the heart of one abhorr'd:
Nay, start not—no—nor bend thy knee,
Nor 'midst my sins such act record;
Thou wilt absolve me from the deed,
For he was hostile to thy creed:
The very name of Nazarene
Was wormwood to his Paynim spleen.
Ungrateful fool! since but for brands
Well wielded in some hardy hands,
And wounds by Galilean given,
The surest pass to Turkish heaven,
For him his Houris still might wait
Impatient at the Prophet's gate.
I loved her—love will find its way
Through paths where wolves would fear to prey;
And if it dares enough, 'twere hard
If passion met not some reward—
No matter how, or where, or why,
I did not vainly seek, nor sigh:
Yet sometimes, with remorse, in vain
I wish she had not loved again.
She died—I dare not tell thee how;
But look—'tis written on my brow!
There read of Cain the curse and crime,
In characters unworn by time:
Still, ere thou dost condemn me, pause;
Not mine the act, though I the cause.
Yet did he but what I had done
Had she been false to more than one.
Faithless to him, he gave the blow;

But true to me, I laid him low:
Howe'er deserved her doom might be,
Her treachery was truth to me;
To me she gave her heart, that all
Which tyranny can ne'er enthrall;
And I, alas! too late to save!
Yet all I then could give, I gave—
'Twas some relief—our foe a grave.
His death sits lightly; but her fate
Has made me—what thou well may'st hate.
His doom was seal'd—he knew it well,
Warn'd by the voice of stern Tahcer,
Deep in whose darkly boding ear*
The death-shot peal'd of murder near,
As filed the troop to where they fell!
He died too in the battle broil,
A time that heeds nor pain nor toil;
One cry to Mohammed for aid,
One prayer to Allah all he made:
He knew and cross'd me in the fray—
I gazed upon him where he lay,
And watch'd his spirit ebb away:
Though pierced like pard by hunters' steel,
He felt not half that now I feel.

* This superstition of a second-hearing (for I never met with downright second-sight in the East) fell once under my own observation. On my third journey to Cape Colonna, early in 1811, as we passed through the defile that leads from the hamlet between Keratia and Colonna, I observed Dervish Tahiri riding rather out of the path, and leaning his head upon his hand, as if in pain. I rode up and inquired. "We are in peril," he answered.—"What peril? we are not now in Albania, nor in the passes to Ephesus, Messalunghi, or Lepanto; there are plenty of us, well armed, and the Choriates have not courage to be thieves."—"True, Affendi, but nevertheless the shot is ringing in my ears."—"The shot! not a tophaike has been fired this morning."—"I hear it, notwithstanding—Bom—Bom—as plainly as I hear your voice."—"Psha!"—"As you please, Affendi; if it is written, so will it be."—I left this quick-eared predestinarian, and rode up to Basili, his Christian compatriot, whose ears, though not at all prophetic, by no means relished the intelligence. We all arrived at Colonna, remained some hours, and returned leisurely, saying a variety of brilliant things, in more languages than spoiled the building of Babel, upon the mistaken seer. Romaic, Arnaut, Turkish, Italian, and English were all exercised, in various conceits, upon the unfortunate Mussulman. While we were contemplating the beautiful prospect, Dervish was occupied about the columns. I thought he was deranged into an antiquarian, and asked him if he had become a "*Palac-castro*" man? "No," said he, "but these pillars will be useful in making a stand;" and added other remarks, which at least evinced his own belief in his troublesome faculty of *fore-hearing*. On our return to Athens we heard from Leoné (a prisoner set ashore some days after) of the intended attack of the Mainotes, mentioned, with the cause of its not taking place, in the notes to "Childe Harold," Canto II. I was at some pains to question the man, and he described the dresses, arms, and marks of the horses of our party so accurately, that, with other circumstances, we could not doubt of *his* being in "villanous company," and ourselves in a bad neighborhood. Dervish became a soothsayer for life, and I dare say he is now hearing more musketry than ever will be fired, to the great refreshment of the Arnauts of Berat, and his native mountains.—I shall mention one trait more of this singular race. In March, 1811, a remarkably stout and active Arnaut came (I believe the fiftieth on the same errand) to offer himself as an attendant, which was declined. "Well, Affendi," quoth he, "may you live!—you would have found me useful. I shall leave the town for the hills to-morrow; in the winter I return; perhaps you will then receive me."—Dervish, who was present, remarked as a thing of course, and of no consequence, "In the meantime he will join the Klephtes" (robbers), which was true to the letter. If not cut off, they come down in the winter, and pass it unmolested in some town, where they are often as well known as their exploits.

I search'd, but vainly search'd, to find
The workings of a wounded mind;
Each feature of that sullen corse
Betray'd his rage, but no remorse.
Oh, what had Vengeance given to trace
Despair upon his dying face!
The late repentance of that hour
When Penitence hath lost her power
To tear one terror from the grave,
And will not soothe, and cannot save.

. . . . . .

"The cold in clime are cold in blood,
Their love can scarce deserve the name,
But mine was like the lava flood
That boils in Ætna's breast of flame.
I cannot prate in puling strain
Of lady-love, and beauty's chain:
If changing cheek, and scorching vein,
Lips taught to writhe, but not complain,
If bursting heart, and madd'ning brain,
And daring deed, and vengeful steel,
And all that I have felt, and feel,
Betoken love—that love was mine,
And shown by many a bitter sign.
'Tis true, I could not whine nor sigh,
I knew but to obtain or die.
I die—but first, I have possess'd,
And come what may, I *have been* bless'd.
Shall I the doom I sought upbraid?
No—reft of all, yet undismay'd
But for the thought of Leila slain,
Give me the pleasure with the pain,
So would I live and love again.
I grieve, but not, my holy guide!
For him who dies, but her who died:
She sleeps beneath the wandering wave—
Ah! had she but an earthly grave,
This breaking heart and throbbing head
Should seek and share her narrow bed.
She was a form of life and light,
That, seen, became a part of sight;
And rose, where'er I turn'd mine eye,
The Morning-star of Memory!

"Yes, Love indeed is light from heaven;
A spark of that immortal fire
With angels shared, by Allah given,
To lift from earth our low desire.
Devotion wafts the mind above,
But Heaven itself descends in love;
A feeling from the Godhead caught,
To wean from self each sordid thought;
A Ray of Him who form'd the whole;
A Glory circling round the soul!
I grant *my* love imperfect, all
That mortals by the name miscall;

Then deem it evil, what thou wilt;
But say, oh say, *hers* was not guilt!
She was my life's unerring light:
That quench'd, what beam shall break my night?
Oh! would it shone to lead me still,
Although to death or deadliest ill!
Why marvel ye, if they who lose
This present joy, this future hope,
No more with sorrow meekly cope;
In frenzy then their fate accuse:
In madness do those fearful deeds
That seem to add but guilt to woe?
Alas! the breast that inly bleeds
Hath nought to dread from outward blow:
Who falls from all he knows of bliss,
Cares little into what abyss.
Fierce as the gloomy vulture 's now
To thee, old man, my deeds appear:
I read abhorrence on thy brow.
And this too was I born to bear!
'Tis true, that, like that bird of prey,
With havoc have I mark'd my way:
But this was taught me by the dove,
To die—and know no second love.
This lesson yet hath man to learn,
Taught by the thing he dares to spurn!
The bird that sings within the brake,
The swan that swims upon the lake,
One mate, and one alone, will take.
And let the fool still prone to range,
And sneer on all who cannot change,
Partake his jest with boasting boys;
I envy not his varied joys,
But deem such feeble, heartless man,
Less than yon solitary swan;
Far, far beneath the shallow maid
He left believing and betray'd.
Such shame at least was never mine—
Leila! each thought was only thine!
My good, my guilt, my weal, my woe,
My hope on high—my all below.
Earth holds no other like to thee,
Or, if it doth, in vain for me:
For worlds I dare not view the dame
Resembling thee, yet not the same.
The very crimes that mar my youth,
This bed of death—attest my truth!
'Tis all too late—thou wert, thou art
The cherish'd madness of my heart!

"And she was lost—and yet I breathed,
But not the breath of human life;
A serpent round my heart was wreathed,
And stung my every thought to strife,
Alike all time, abhorr'd all place,
Shuddering I shrunk from Nature's face,

Where every hue that charm'd before
The blackness of my bosom wore.
The rest thou dost already know,
And all my sins, and half my woe.
But talk no more of penitence;
Thou see'st I soon shall part from hence:
And if thy holy tale were true,
The deed that's done, canst *thou* undo?
Think me not thankless—but this grief
Looks not to priesthood for relief.*
My soul's estate in secret guess:
But wouldst thou pity more, say less.
When thou canst bid my Leila live,
Then will I sue thee to forgive;
Then plead my cause in that high place
Where purchased masses proffer grace.
Go, when the hunter's hand hath wrung
From forest-cave her shrieking young,
And calm the lonely lioness:
But soothe not—mock not *my* distress!

"In earlier days, and calmer hours,
When heart with heart delights to blend,
Where bloom my native valley's bowers,
I had—ah! have I now?—a friend!
To him this pledge I charge thee send,
Memorial of a youthful vow;
I would remind him of my end:
Though souls absorb'd like mine allow
Brief thought to distant friendship's claim,
Yet dear to him my blighted name.
'Tis strange—he prophesied my doom,
And I have smiled—I then could smile—
When Prudence would his voice assume,
And warn—I reck'd not what—the while;
But now remembrance whispers o'er
Those accents scarcely mark'd before.
Say—that his bodings came to pass,
And he will start to hear their truth,
And wish his words had not been sooth:
Tell him, unheeding as I was,
Through many a busy bitter scene
Of all our golden youth had been,
In pain, my faltering tongue had tried
To bless his memory ere I died;
But Heaven in wrath would turn away,
If Guilt should for the guiltless pray.
I do not ask him not to blame,
Too gentle he to wound my name;
And what have I to do with fame?
I do not ask him not to mourn,
Such cold request might sound like scorn;

* The monk's sermon is omitted. It seems to have had so little effect upon the patient that it could have no hopes from the reader. It may be sufficient to say, that it was of a customary length (as may be perceived from the interruptions and uneasiness of the penitent), and was delivered in the nasal tone of all orthodox preachers.

And what than friendship's manly tear
May better grace a brother's bier?
But bear this ring, his own of old,
And tell him—what thou dost behold!
The wither'd frame, the ruin'd mind,
The wrack by passion left behind,
A shrivell'd scroll, a scatter'd leaf,
Sear'd by the autumn blast of grief!

. . . . . .

"Tell me no more of fancy's gleam,
No, father, no, 'twas not a dream;
Alas! the dreamer first must sleep,
I only watch'd, and wish'd to weep;
But could not, for my burning brow
Throbb'd to the very brain as now:
I wish'd but for a single tear,
As something welcome, new, and dear;
I wish'd it then, I wish it still;
Despair is stronger than my will.
Waste not thine orison, despair
Is mightier than thy pious prayer:
I would not, if I might, be blest;
I want no paradise, but rest.
'Twas then, I tell thee, father! then
I saw her; yes, she lived again;
And shining in her white symar,*
As through yon pale gray cloud the star
Which now I gaze on, as on her,
Who look'd, and looks far lovelier;
Dimly I view its trembling spark;
To-morrow's night shall be more dark;
And I, before its rays appear,
That lifeless thing the living fear.
I wander, father! for my soul
Is fleeting towards the final goal.
I saw her, friar! and I rose
Forgetful of our former woes;
And rushing from my couch, I dart,
And clasp her to my desperate heart;
I clasp—what is it that I clasp?
No breathing form within my grasp,
No heart that beats reply to mine,
Yet, Leila! yet the form is thine!
And art thou, dearest, changed so much,
As meet my eye, yet mock my touch?
Ah! were thy beauties e'er so cold,
I care not; so my arms unfold
The all they ever wish'd to hold.
Alas! around a shadow prest,
They shrink upon my lonely breast;
Yet still 'tis there! In silence stands,
And beckons with beseeching hands!
With braided hair, and bright-black eye—
I knew 'twas false—she could not die!

* "Symar," shroud.

But he is dead! within the dell
I saw him buried where he fell;
He comes not, for he cannot break
From earth; why then art thou awake?
They told me wild waves roll'd above
The face I view, the form I love:
They told me—'twas a hideous tale!
I'd tell it, but my tongue would fail:
If true, and from thine ocean-cave
Thou com'st to claim a calmer grave;
Oh! pass thy dewy fingers o'er
This brow that then will burn no more;
Or place them on my hopeless heart:
But, shape or shade! whate'er thou art,
In mercy ne'er again depart!
Or farther with thee bear my soul
Than winds can waft and waters roll!

. . . . . .

"Such is my name, and such my tale.
Confessor! to thy secret ear
I breathe the sorrows I bewail,
And thank thee for the generous tear
This glazing eye could never shed.
Then lay me with the humblest dead,
And, save the cross above my head,
Be neither name nor emblem spread,
By prying stranger to be read,
Or stay the passing pilgrim's tread."

He pass'd—nor of his name and race
Hath left a token or a trace,
Save what the father must not say
Who shrived him on his dying day:
This broken tale was all we knew
Of her he loved, or him he slew.*

* The circumstance to which the above story relates was not very uncommon in Turkey. A few years ago, the wife of Muchtar Pacha complained to his father of his son's supposed infidelity; he asked with whom, and she had the barbarity to give in a list of the twelve handsomest women in Yanina. They were seized, fastened up in sacks, and drowned in the lake the same night! One of the guards who was present informed me that not one of the victims uttered a cry, or showed a symptom of terror, at so sudden a "wrench from all we know, from all we love." The fate of Phrosine, the fairest of this sacrifice, is the subject of many a Romaic and Arnaut ditty. The story in the text is one told of a young Venetian many years ago, and now nearly forgotten. I heard it by accident recited by one of the coffee-house story-tellers who abound in the Levant, and sing or recite their narratives. The additions and interpolations by the translator will be easily distinguished from the rest, by the want of Eastern imagery: and I regret that my memory has retained so few fragments of the original. For the contents of some of the notes, I am indebted partly to D'Herbelot, and partly to that most Eastern, and, as Mr. Weber justly entitles it, "sublime tale," the "Caliph Vathek." I do not know from what source the author of that singular volume may have drawn his materials; some of his incidents are to be found in the "Bibliothèque Orientale:" but for correctness of costume, beauty of description, and power of imagination, it far surpasses all European imitations; and bears such marks of originality, that those who have visited the East will find some difficulty in believing it to be more than a translation. As an Eastern tale, even Rasselas must bow before it; his "Happy Valley" will not bear a comparison with the "Hall of Eblis."

THE BRIDE OF ABYDOS:

A TURKISH TALE.

"Had we never loved so kindly,
Had we never loved so blindly,
Never met or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted."—BURNS.

TO

THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD HOLLAND

THIS TALE IS INSCRIBED,

WITH EVERY SENTIMENT OF REGARD AND RESPECT,

BY HIS GRATEFULLY OBLIGED AND

SINCERE FRIEND,

BYRON.

THE BRIDE OF ABYDOS.

CANTO THE FIRST.

I.

Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle
Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime,
Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle,
Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime?
Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,
Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever shine;
Where the light wings of Zephyr, oppress'd with perfume,
Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gúl in her bloom;*
Where the citron and olive are fairest of fruit,
And the voice of the nightingale never is mute;
Where the tints of the earth, and the hues of the sky,
In color though varied, in beauty may vie,
And the purple of Ocean is deepest in dye;
Where the virgins are soft as the roses they twine,
And all, save the spirit of man, is divine?
'Tis the clime of the East; 'tis the land of the Sun—
Can he smile on such deeds as his children have done?†
Oh! wild as the accents of lovers' farewell
Are the hearts which they bear, and the tales which they tell.

II.

Begirt with many a gallant slave,
Apparell'd as becomes the brave,
Awaiting each his lord's behest
To guide his steps, or guard his rest,
Old Giaffir sate in his Divan:
Deep thought was in his aged eye;
And though the face of Mussulman
Not oft betrays to standers by
The mind within, well skill'd to hide
All but unconquerable pride,
His pensive cheek and pondering brow
Did more than he was wont avow.

* "Gúl," the rose.

† "Souls made of fire, and children of the Sun,
With whom revenge is virtue."
YOUNG'S "REVENGE."

III.

"Let the chamber be clear'd."—The train disappear'd—
"Now call me the chief of the Harem guard."
With Giaffir is none but his only son,
And the Nubian awaiting the sire's award.
"Haroun—when all the crowd that wait
Are pass'd beyond the outer gate,
(Woe to the head whose eye beheld
My child Zuleika's face unveil'd!)
Hence, lead my daughter from her tower;
Her fate is fix'd this very hour:
Yet not to her repeat my thought;
By me alone be duty taught!"

"Pacha! to hear is to obey."
No more must slave to despot say—
Then to the tower had ta'en his way,
But here young Selim silence brake,
First lowly rendering reverence meet!
And downcast look'd, and gently spake,
Still standing at the Pacha's feet:
For son of Moslem must expire,
Ere dare to sit before his sire!

"Father! for fear that thou shouldst chide
My sister, or her sable guide,
Know—for the fault, if fault there be,
Was mine—then fall thy frowns on me—
So lovelily the morning shone,
That—let the old and weary sleep—
I could not; and to view alone
The fairest scenes of land and deep,
With none to listen and reply
To thoughts with which my heart beat high,
Were irksome—for whate'er my mood,
In sooth I love not solitude;
I on Zuleika's slumber broke,
And, as thou knowest that for me
Soon turns the Harem's grating key,
Before the guardian slaves awoke
We to the cypress groves had flown,
And made earth, main, and heaven our own!
There linger'd we, beguiled too long
With Mejnoun's tale, or Sadi's song,*
Till I, who heard the deep tambour†
Beat thy Divan's approaching hour,
To thee, and to my duty true,
Warn'd by the sound, to greet thee flew:
But there Zuleika wanders yet—
Nay, father, rage not—nor forget
That none can pierce that secret bower
But those who watch the women's tower."

* Mejnoun and Leila, the Romeo and Juliet of the East. Sadi, the moral poet of Persia.

† "Tambour," Turkish drum, which sounds at sunrise, noon, and twilight.

IV.

"Son of a slave"—the Pacha said—
"From unbelieving mother bred,
Vain were a father's hope to see
Aught that beseems a man in thee.
Thou, when thine arm should bend the bow,
And hurl the dart, and curb the steed,
Thou, Greek in soul if not in creed,
Must pore where babbling waters flow,
And watch unfolding roses blow.
Would that yon orb, whose matin glow
Thy listless eyes so much admire,
Would lend thee something of his fire!
Thou, who wouldst see this battlement
By Christian cannon piecemeal rent;
Nay, tamely view old Stamboul's wall
Before the dogs of Moscow fall,
Nor strike one stroke for life and death
Against the curs of Nazareth!
Go—let thy less than woman's hand
Assume the distaff—not the brand.
But, Haroun!—to my daughter speed:
And hark—of thine own head take heed—
If thus Zuleika oft takes wing—
Thou see'st yon bow—it hath a string!"

V.

No sound from Selim's lip was heard,
At least that met old Giaffir's ear,
But every frown and every word
Pierced keener than a Christian's sword.
"Son of a slave!—reproach'd with fear!
Those gibes had cost another dear.
Son of a slave!—and *who* my sire?"
Thus held his thoughts their dark career;
And glances e'en of more than ire
Flash forth, then faintly disappear.
Old Giaffir gazed upon his son
And started; for within his eye
He read how much his wrath had done;
He saw rebellion there begun:
"Come hither, boy—what, no reply?
I mark thee—and I know thee too;
But there be deeds thou dar'st not do:
But if thy beard had manlier length,
And if thy hand had skill and strength,
I'd joy to see thee break a lance,
Albeit against my own perchance."

As sneeringly these accents fell,
On Selim's eye he fiercely gazed:
That eye return'd him glance for glance,
And proudly to his sire's was raised,
Till Giaffir's quail'd and shrunk askance—
And why—he felt, but durst not tell.

"Much I misdoubt this wayward boy
Will one day work me more annoy:
I never loved him from his birth,
And—but his arm is little worth,
And scarcely in the chase could cope
With timid fawn or antelope,
Far less would venture into strife
Where man contends for fame and life—
I would not trust that look or tone:
No—nor the blood so near my own.
That blood—he hath not heard—no more—
I'll watch him closer than before.
He is an Arab to my sight,*
Or Christian crouching in the fight—
But hark!—I hear Zulcika's voice;
Like Houris' hymn it meets mine ear:
She is the offspring of my choice;
Oh! more than e'en her mother dear,
With all to hope, and nought to fear—
My Peri!—ever welcome here!
Sweet, as the desert fountain's wave,
To lips just cool'd in time to save—
Such to my longing sight art thou;
Nor can they waft to Mecca's shrine
More thanks for life, than I for thine,
Who blest thy birth, and bless thee now."

VI.

Fair, as the first that fell of womankind,
When on that dread yet lovely serpent smiling,
Whose image then was stamp'd upon her mind—
But once beguiled—and evermore beguiling;
Dazzling, as that, oh! too transcendent vision
To Sorrow's phantom-peopled slumber given,
When heart meets heart again in dreams Elysian,
And paints the lost on Earth revived in Heaven;
Soft, as the memory of buried love;
Pure, as the prayer which Childhood wafts above;
Was she—the daughter of that rude old Chief,
Who met the maid with tears—but not of grief.

Who hath not proved how feebly words essay
To fix one spark of Beauty's heavenly ray?
Who doth not feel, until his failing sight
Faints into dimness with its own delight,
His changing cheek, his sinking heart confess
The might—the majesty of Loveliness?
Such was Zulcika—such around her shone
The nameless charms unmark'd by her alone;
The light of love, the purity of grace,
The mind, the Music breathing from her face,†

* The Turks abhor the Arabs (who return the compliment a hundred-fold) even more than they hate the Christians.

† This expression has met with objections. I will not refer to "Him who hath not Music in his soul," but merely request the reader to recollect, for ten seconds, the features of the woman whom he believes to be the most beautiful; and if he

The heart whose softness harmonized the whole—
And, oh! that eye was in itself a Soul!

Her graceful arms in meekness bending
Across her gently-budding breast;
At one kind word those arms extending
To clasp the neck of him who blest
His child caressing and caressed,
Zuleika came—and Giaffir felt
His purpose half within him melt:
Not that against her fancied weal
His heart though stern could ever feel;
Affection chain'd her to that heart;
Ambition tore the links apart.

VII.

"Zuleika! child of gentleness!
How dear this very day must tell,
When I forget my own distress,
In losing what I love so well,
To bid thee with another dwell:
Another! and a braver man
Was never seen in battle's van.
We Moslem reck not much of blood;
But yet the line of Carasman*
Unchanged, unchangeable, hath stood
First of the bold Timariot bands
That won and well can keep their lands.
Enough that he who comes to woo
Is kinsman of the Bey Oglou:
His years need scarce a thought employ:
I would not have thee wed a boy.
And thou shalt have a noble dower:
And his and my united power
Will laugh to scorn the death-firman,
Which others tremble but to scan,
And teach the messenger what fate
The bearer of such boon may wait.†

then does not comprehend fully what is feebly expressed in the above line, I shall be sorry for us both. For an eloquent passage in the latest work of the first female writer of this, perhaps of any age, on the analogy (and the immediate comparison excited by that analogy) between "painting and music," see vol. iii. cap. 10. "De l'Allemagne." And is not this connection still stronger with the original than the copy? with the coloring of Nature than of Art? After all, this is rather to be felt than described; still, I think there are some who will understand it, at least they would have done had they beheld the countenance whose speaking harmony suggested the idea; for this passage is not drawn from imagination but memory, that mirror which Affliction dashes to the earth, and looking down upon the fragments, only beholds the reflection multiplied!

* Carasman Oglou, or Karn Osman Oglou, is the principal landholder in Turkey; he governs Magnesia. Those who, by a kind of feudal tenure, possess land on condition of service, are called Timariots; they serve as Spahis, according to the extent of territory, and bring a certain number into the field, generally cavalry.

† When a Pacha is sufficiently strong to resist, the single messenger, who is always the first bearer of the order for his death, is strangled instead, and sometimes five or six, one after the other, on the same errand, by command of the refractory patient: if, on the contrary, he is weak or loyal, he bows, kisses the Sultan's respectable signature, and is bowstrung with great complaisance. In 1809, several of "these presents" were exhibited in the niche of the Seraglio gate; among others, the head of the Pacha of Bagdad, a brave young man, cut off by treachery, after a desperate resistance.

And now thou know'st thy father's will;
All that thy sex hath need to know:
'Twas mine to teach obedience still—
The way to love, thy lord may show."

VIII.

In silence bow'd the virgin's head;
And if her eye was fill'd with tears
That stifled feeling dare not shed,
And changed her cheek from pale to red,
And red to pale, as through her ears
Those winged words like arrows sped,
What could such be but maiden fears?
So bright the tear in Beauty's eye,
Love half regrets to kiss it dry;
So sweet the blush of Bashfulness,
Even Pity scarce can wish it less!

Whate'er it was the sire forgot;
Or if remember'd, mark'd it not;
Thrice clapp'd his hands, and call'd his steed,*
Resign'd his gem-adorn'd chibouque,†
And mounting featly for the mead,
With Maugrabee‡ and Mamaluke,
His way amid his Delis took,§
To witness many an active deed
With sabre keen, or blunt jerreed.
The Kislar only and his Moors
Watch well the Harem's massy doors.

IX.

His head was leant upon his hand,
His eye look'd o'er the dark blue water
That swiftly glides and gently swells
Between the winding Dardanelles;
But yet he saw nor sea nor strand,
Nor even his Pacha's turban'd band
Mix in the game of mimic slaughter,
Careering cleave the folded felt‖
With sabre-stroke right sharply dealt;
Nor mark'd the javelin-darting crowd,
Nor heard their Ollahs wild and loud—¶
He thought but of old Giaffir's daughter!

* Clapping of the hands calls the servants. The Turks hate a superfluous expenditure of voice, and they have no bells.

† "Chibouque," the Turkish pipe, of which the amber mouthpiece, and sometimes the ball which contains the leaf, is adorned with precious stones, if in possession of the wealthier orders.

‡ "Maugrabee," Moorish mercenaries.

§ "Delis," bravoes who form the forlorn-hope of the cavalry, and always begin the action.

‖ A twisted fold of *felt* is used for scimitar practice by the Turks, and few but Mussulman arms can cut through it at a single stroke: sometimes a tough turban is used for the same purpose. The jerreed is a game of blunt javelins, animated and graceful.

¶ "Ollahs," Alla il Allah, the "Leilies," as the Spanish poets call them; the sound is Ollah; a cry of which the Turks, for a silent people, are somewhat pro-

X.

No word from Selim's bosom broke;
One sigh Zuleika's thought bespoke:
Still gazed he through the lattice grate,
Pale, mute, and mournfully sedate.
To him Zuleika's eye was turn'd,
But little from his aspect learn'd;
Equal her grief, yet not the same:
Her heart confess'd a gentler flame:
But yet that heart, alarm'd, or weak,
She knew not why, forbade to speak.
Yet speak she must—but when essay?
'How strange he thus should turn away!
Not thus we e'er before have met;
Not thus shall be our parting yet."
Thrice paced she slowly through the room,
And watch'd his eye—it still was fix'd:
She snatch'd the urn wherein was mix'd
The Persian Atar-gûl's perfume,*
And sprinkled all its odors o'er
The pictured roof and marble floor:†
The drops, that through his glittering vest
The playful girl's appeal address'd,
Unheeded o'er his bosom flew,
As if that breast were marble too.
"What, sullen yet? it must not be—
Oh! gentle Selim, this from thee!"
She saw in curious order set
The fairest flowers of Eastern land—
"He loved them once; may touch them yet
If offer'd by Zuleika's hand."
The childish thought was hardly breathed
Before the Rose was pluck'd and wreathed;
The next fond moment saw her seat
Her fairy form at Selim's feet:
"This rose to calm my brother's cares
A message from the Bulbul bears;‡
It says to-night he will prolong
For Selim's ear his sweetest song;
And though his note is somewhat sad,
He 'll try for once a strain more glad,
With some faint hope his alter'd lay
May sing these gloomy thoughts away.

fuse, particularly during the jereed, or in the chase, but mostly in battle. Their animation in the field, and gravity in the chamber, with their pipes and comboloios, form an amusing contrast.

* "Atar-gûl," ottar of roses. The Persian is the finest.

† The ceiling and wainscots, or rather walls, of the Mussulman apartments are generally painted, in great houses, with one eternal and highly-colored view of Constantinople, wherein the principal feature is a noble contempt of perspective; below, arms, scimitars, &c., are in general tastefully and not inelegantly disposed.

‡ It has been much doubted whether the notes of this "Lover of the rose" are sad or merry; and Mr. Fox's remarks on the subject have provoked some learned controversy as to the opinions of the ancients on the subject. I dare not venture a conjecture on the point, though a little inclined to the "errare malleni," &c., if Mr. Fox *was* mistaken.

XI.

"What! not receive my foolish flower?
Nay then I am indeed unblest:
On me can thus thy forehead lower?
And know'st thou not who loves thee best?
Oh, Selim dear! oh, more than dearest!
Say, is it me thou hat'st or fearest?
Come, lay thy head upon my breast,
And I will kiss thee into rest,
Since words of mine, and songs must fail
E'en from my fabled nightingale.
I knew our sire at times was stern,
But this from thee had yet to learn:
Too well I know he loves thee not;
But is Zuleika's love forgot?
Ah! deem I right? the Pacha's plan—
This kinsman Bey of Carasman
Perhaps may prove some foe of thine:
If so, I swear by Mecca's shrine,
If shrines that ne'er approach allow
To woman's step admit her vow,
Without thy free consent, command,
The Sultan should not have my hand!
Think'st thou that I could bear to part
With thee, and learn to halve my heart?
Ah! were I sever'd from thy side,
Where were thy friend—and who my guide?
Years have not seen, Time shall not see
The hour that tears my soul from thee:
Even Azrael,* from his deadly quiver
When flies that shaft, and fly it must,
That parts all else, shall doom for ever
Our hearts to undivided dust!"

XII.

He lived—he breathed—he moved—he felt;
He raised the maid from where she knelt;
His trance was gone—his keen eye shone
With thoughts that long in darkness dwelt;
With thoughts that burn—in rays that melt.
As the stream late conceal'd
By the fringe of its willows,
When it rushes reveal'd
In the light of its billows;
As the bolt bursts on high
From the black cloud that bound it,
Flash'd the soul of that eye
Through the long lashes round it.
A war-horse at the trumpet's sound,
A lion roused by heedless hound,
A tyrant waked to sudden strife
By graze of ill-directed knife,
Starts not to more convulsive life

* "Azrael," the angel of death.

Than he, who heard that vow, display'd,
And all, before repress'd, betray'd:

"Now thou art mine, for ever mine,
With life to keep, and scarce with life resign:
Now thou art mine, that sacred oath,
Though sworn by one, hath bound us both.
Yes, fondly, wisely hast thou done;
That vow hath saved more heads than one:
But blench not thou—thy simplest tress
Claims more from me than tenderness;
I would not wrong the slenderest hair
That clusters round thy forehead fair,
For all the treasures buried far
Within the caves of Istakar.*
This morning clouds upon me lower'd,
Reproaches on my head were shower'd,
And Giaffir almost call'd me coward!
Now I have motive to be brave;
The son of his neglected slave—
Nay, start not, 'twas the term he gave—
May show, though little apt to vaunt,
A heart his words nor deeds can daunt.
His son, indeed!—yet, thanks to thee,
Perchance I am, at least shall be!
But let our plighted secret vow
Be only known to us as now.
I know the wretch who dares demand
From Giaffir thy reluctant hand;
More ill-got wealth, a meaner soul
Holds not a Musselim's control:†
Was he not bred in Egripo?‡
A viler race let Israel show!
But let that pass—to none be told
Our oath; the rest let time unfold.
To me and mine leave Osman Bey;
I've partisans for peril's day:
Think not I am what I appear;
I've arms, and friends, and vengeance near."

XIII.

"Think not thou art what thou appearest!
My Selim, thou art sadly changed:
This morn I saw thee gentlest, dearest;
But now thou'rt from thyself estranged.
My love thou surely knew'st before,
It ne'er was less, nor can be more.
To see thee, hear thee, near thee stay,
And hate the night, I know not why,
Save that we meet not but by day;

* The treasures of the pre-Adamite Sultans. See D'Herbelot, article *Istakar*.

† "Musselim," a governor, the next in rank after a Pacha; a Waywode is the third; and then come the Agas.

‡ "Egripo"—the Negropont. According to the proverb, the Turks of Egripo, the Jews of Salonica, and the Greeks of Athens, are the worst of their respective races.

With thee to live, with thee to die,
I dare not to my hope deny:
Thy cheek, thine eyes, thy lips to kiss,
Like this—and this—no more than this;
For, Allah! sure thy lips are flame:
What fever in thy veins is flushing!
My own have nearly caught the same,
At least I feel my cheek too blushing.
To soothe thy sickness, watch thy health,
Partake, but never waste thy wealth,
Or stand with smiles unmurmuring by,
And lighten half thy poverty;
Do all but close thy dying eye,
For that I could not live to try;
To these alone my thoughts aspire:
More can I do? or thou require?
But, Selim, thou must answer why
We need so much of mystery?
The cause I cannot dream nor tell,
But be it, since thou say'st 'tis well;
Yet what thou mean'st by 'arms' and 'friends,'
Beyond my weaker sense extends.
I meant that Giaffir should have heard
The very vow I plighted thee;
His wrath would not revoke my word:
But surely he would leave me free.
Can this fond wish seem strange in me,
To be what I have ever been?
What other hath Zuleika seen
From simple childhood's earliest hour?
What other can she seek to see
Than thee, companion of her bower,
The partner of her infancy?
These cherish'd thoughts with life begun,
Say, why must I no more avow?
What change is wrought to make me shun
The truth; my pride, and thine till now?
To meet the gaze of stranger's eyes
Our law, our creed, our God denies:
Nor shall one wandering thought of mine
At such, our Prophet's will, repine:
No! happier made by that decree!
He left me all in leaving thee.
Deep were my anguish, thus compell'd
To wed with one I ne'er beheld:
This wherefore should I not reveal?
Why wilt thou urge me to conceal?
I know the Pacha's haughty mood
To thee hath never boded good:
And he so often storms at nought,
Allah! forbid that e'er he ought!
And why I know not, but within
My heart concealment weighs like sin.
If, then, such secrecy be crime,
And such it feels while lurking here,

Oh, Selim! tell me yet in time,
Nor leave me thus to thoughts of fear.
Ah! yonder see the Tchocadar,*
My father leaves the mimic war:
I tremble now to meet his eye—
Say, Selim, canst thou tell me why?"

XIV.

"Zuleika—to thy tower's retreat
Betake thee—Giaffir I can greet:
And now with him I fain must prate
Of firmans, imposts, levies, state.
There 's fearful news from Danube's banks,
Our Vizier nobly thins his ranks,
For which the Giaour may give him thanks!
Our Sultan hath a shorter way
Such costly triumph to repay.
But, mark me, when the twilight drum
Hath warn'd the troops to food and sleep,
Unto thy cell will Selim come:
Then softly from the Harem creep
Where we may wander by the deep:
Our garden-battlements are steep;
Nor these will rash intruder climb
To list our words, or stint our time;
And if he doth, I want not steel
Which some have felt, and more may feel.
Then shalt thou learn of Selim more
Than thou hast heard or thought before:
Trust me, Zuleika—fear not me!
Thou know'st I hold a Harem key."

"Fear thee, my Selim! ne'er till now
Did word like this—"
"Delay not thou;
I keep the key—and Haroun's guard
Have *some*, and hope of *more* reward.
To-night, Zuleika, thou shalt hear
My tale, my purpose, and my fear:
I am not, love! what I appear."

CANTO THE SECOND.

I.

THE winds are high on Helle's wave,
As on that night of stormy water,
When Love, who sent, forgot to save
The young, the beautiful, the brave,
The lonely hope of Sestos' daughter.
Oh! when alone along the sky
Her turret-torch was blazing high,
Though rising gale, and breaking foam,
And shrieking sea-birds warn'd him home;
And clouds aloft and tides below,
With signs and sounds, forbade to go,

* "Tchocadar," one of the attendants who precedes a man of authority.

He could not see, he would not hear,
Or sound or sign foreboding fear;
His eye but saw the light of love,
The only star it hail'd above;
His ear but rang with Hero's song,
"Ye waves, divide not lovers long!"—
That tale is old, but love anew
May nerve young hearts to prove as true.

II.

The winds are high, and Helle's tide
Rolls darkly heaving to the main;
And Night's descending shadows hide
That field with blood bedew'd in vain,
The desert of old Priam's pride;
The tombs, sole relics of his reign,
All—save immortal dreams that could beguile
The blind old man of Scio's rocky isle!

III.

Oh! yet—for there my steps have been!
These feet have press'd the sacred shore,
These limbs that buoyant wave hath borne—
Minstrel! with thee to muse, to mourn,
To trace again those fields of yore,
Believing every hillock green
Contains no fabled hero's ashes,
And that around the undoubted scene
Thine own "broad Hellespont" still dashes,*
Be long my lot! and cold were he
Who there could gaze denying thee!

IV.

The night hath closed on Helle's stream,
Nor yet hath risen on Ida's hill
That moon, which shone on his high theme:
No warrior chides her peaceful beam,
But conscious shepherds bless it still.
Their flocks are grazing on the mound
Of him who felt the Dardan's arrow;
That mighty heap of gather'd ground
Which Ammon's son ran proudly round,†
By nations raised, by monarchs crown'd,

* The wrangling about this epithet, "the broad Hellespont," or the "boundless Hellespont," whether it means one or the other, or what it means at all, has been beyond all possibility of detail. I have even heard it disputed on the spot; and not foreseeing a speedy conclusion to the controversy, amused myself with swimming across it in the meantime, and probably may again, before the point is settled. Indeed, the question as to the truth of "the tale of Troy divine" still continues, much of it resting upon the talismanic word ἄπειρος: probably Homer had the same notion of distance that a coquette has of time, and when he talks of boundless, means half a mile; as the latter, by a like figure, when she says *eternal* attachment, simply specifies three weeks.

† Before his Persian invasion, and crowned the altar with laurel, &c. He was afterwards imitated by Caracalla in his race. It is believed that the last also poisoned a friend, named Festus, for the sake of new Patroclan games. I have seen the sheep feeding on the tombs of Æsietes and Antilochus: the first is in the centre of the plain.

Is now a lone and nameless barrow!
Within—thy dwelling-place how narrow!
Without—can only strangers breathe
The name of him that *was* beneath:
Dust long outlasts the storied stone;
But Thou—thy very dust is gone!

V.

Late, late to-night will Dian cheer
The swain, and chase the boatman's fear;
Till then—no beacon on the cliff
May shape the course of struggling skiff;
The scatter'd lights that skirt the bay,
All, one by one, have died away;
The only lamp of this lone hour
Is glimmering in Zuleika's tower.

Yes! there is light in that lone chamber,
And o'er her silken ottoman
Are thrown the fragrant beads of amber,
O'er which her fairy fingers ran;*
Near these, with emerald rays beset,
(How could she thus that gem forget?)
Her mother's sainted amulet,†
Whereon engraved the Koorsee text,
Could smooth this life, and win the next;
And by her Comboloio lies‡
A Koran of illumined dyes;
And many a bright emblazon'd rhyme
By Persian scribes redeem'd from time;
And o'er those scrolls, not oft so mute,
Reclines her now neglected lute;
And round her lamp of fretted gold
Bloom flowers in urns of China's mould;
The richest work of Iran's loom,
And Sheeraz' tribute of perfume;
All that can eye or sense delight
Are gather'd in that gorgeous room:
But yet it hath an air of gloom.
She, of this Peri cell the sprite,
What doth she hence, and on so rude a night?

VI.

Wrapt in the darkest sable vest,
Which none save noblest Moslem wear,

* When rubbed, the amber is susceptible of a perfume, which is slight but not disagreeable.

† The belief in amulets engraved on gems, or enclosed in gold boxes, containing scraps from the Koran, worn round the neck, wrist, or arm, is still universal in the East. The Koorsee (throne) verse in the second chapter of the Koran describes the attributes of the Most High, and is engraved in this manner, and worn by the pious, as the most esteemed and sublime of all sentences.

‡ "Combolojo," a Turkish rosary. The MSS., particularly those of the Persians, are richly adorned and illuminated. The Greek females are kept in utter ignorance; but many of the Turkish girls are highly accomplished, though not actually qualified for a Christian coterie. Perhaps some of our own "*blues*" might not be the worse for *bleaching*.

To guard from winds of heaven the breast
As heaven itself to Selim dear,
With cautious steps the thicket threading,
And starting oft, as through the glade
The gust its hollow moanings made;
Till on the smoother pathway treading,
More free her timid bosom beat,
The maid pursued her silent guide;
And though her terror urged retreat,
How could she quit her Selim's side?
How teach her tender lips to chide?

VII.

They reach'd at length a grotto, hewn
By nature, but enlarged by art,
Where oft her lute she wont to tune,
And oft her Koran conn'd apart:
And oft in youthful reverie
She dream'd what Paradise might be;
Where woman's parted soul shall go
Her Prophet had disdain'd to show;
But Selim's mansion was secure,
Nor deem'd she, could he long endure
His bower in other worlds of bliss,
Without *her*, most beloved in this!
Oh! who so dear with him could dwell?
What Houri soothe him half so well?

VIII.

Since last she visited the spot
Some change seem'd wrought within the grot;
It might be only that the night
Disguised things seen by better light:
That brazen lamp but dimly threw
A ray of no celestial hue:
But in a nook within the cell
Her eye on stranger objects fell.
There arms were piled, not such as wield
The turban'd Delis in the field;
But brands of foreign blade and hilt,
And one was red—perchance with guilt!
Ah! how without can blood be spilt?
A cup too on the board was set
That did not seem to hold sherbet.
What may this mean? she turn'd to see—
Her Selim—"Oh! can this be he?"

IX.

His robe of pride was thrown aside,
His brow no high-crown'd turban bore,
But in its stead a shawl of red,
Wreathed lightly round, his temples wore:
That dagger, on whose hilt the gem
Were worthy of a diadem,
No longer glitter'd at his waist,
Where pistols unadorn'd were braced;

And from his belt a sabre swung,
And from his shoulder loosely hung
The cloak of white, the thin capote
That decks the wandering Candiote:
Beneath—his golden plated vest
Clung like a cuirass to his breast;
The greaves below his knee that wound
With silvery scales were sheathed and bound.
But were it not that high command
Spake in his eye, and tone, and hand,
All that a careless eye could see
In him was some young Galiongée.*

X.

"I said I was not what I seem'd;
And now thou see'st my words were true:
I have a tale thou hast not dream'd,
If sooth—its truth must others rue.
My story now 'twere vain to hide,
I must not see thee Osman's bride:
But had not thine own lips declared
How much of that young heart I shared,
I could not, must not, yet have shown
The darker secret of my own.
In this I speak not now of love;
That, let time, truth, and peril prove:
But first—oh! never wed another—
Zuleika! I am not thy brother!"

XI.

"Oh! not my brother!—yet unsay—
God! am I left alone on earth
To mourn—I dare not curse—the day
That saw my solitary birth?
Oh! thou wilt love me now no more!
My sinking heart foreboded ill;
But know *me* all I was before,
Thy sister—friend—Zuleika still.
Thou ledd'st me here perchance to kill;
If thou hast cause for vengeance, see
My breast is offer'd—take thy fill!
Far better with the dead to be
Than live thus nothing now to thee;
Perhaps far worse, for now I know
Why Giaffir always seem'd thy foe;
And I, alas! am Giaffir's child,
For whom thou wert contemn'd, reviled.
If not thy sister—wouldst thou save
My life, oh! bid me be thy slave!"

* "Galiongée," or Galiongi, a sailor, that is, a Turkish sailor: the Greeks navigate, the Turks work the guns. Their dress is picturesque; and I have seen the Capitan Pacha more than once wearing it as a kind of *incog.* Their legs, however, are generally naked. The buskins described in the text as sheathed behind with silver are those of an Arnaut robber, who was my host (he had quitted the profession) at his Pyrgo, near Gastouni in the Morea; they were plated in scales one over the other, like the back of an armadillo.

XII.

"My slave, Zuleika!—nay, I'm thine:
But, gentle love, this transport calm,
Thy lot shall yet be link'd with mine;
I swear it by our Prophet's shrine,
And be that thought thy sorrow's balm.
So may the Koran verse display'd*
Upon its steel direct my blade,
In danger's hour to guard us both,
As I preserve that awful oath!
The name in which thy heart hath prided
Must change; but, my Zuleika, know,
That tie is widen'd, not divided,
Although thy Sire 's my deadliest foe.
My father was to Giaffir all
That Selim late was deem'd to thee;
That brother wrought a brother's fall,
But spared, at least, my infancy;
And lull'd me with a vain deceit
That yet a like return may meet.
He rear'd me, not with tender help,
But like the nephew of a Cain;†
He watch'd me like a lion's whelp,
That gnaws and yet may break his chain.
My father's blood in every vein
Is boiling; but for thy dear sake
No present vengeance will I take;
Though here I must no more remain.
But first, beloved Zuleika! hear
How Giaffir wrought this deed of fear.

XIII.

"How first their strife to rancor grew,
If love or envy made them foes,
It matters little if I knew;
In fiery spirits, slights, though few
And thoughtless, will disturb repose.
In war Abdallah's arm was strong,
Remember'd yet in Bosniac song,

* The characters on all Turkish scimitars contain sometimes the name of the place of their manufacture, but more generally a text from the Koran, in letters of gold. Amongst those in my possession is one with a blade of singular construction; it is very broad, and the edge notched into serpentine curves like the ripple of water, or the wavering of flame. I asked the Armenian who sold it what possible use such a figure could add: he said, in Italian, that he did not know; but the Mussulmans had an idea that those of this form gave a severer wound; and liked it because it was "piu feroce." I did not much admire the reason, but bought it for its peculiarity.

† It is to be observed, that every allusion to any thing or personage in the Old Testament, such as the Ark, or Cain, is equally the privilege of Mussulman and Jew: indeed, the former profess to be much better acquainted with the lives, true and fabulous, of the patriarchs, than is warranted by our own sacred writ; and not content with Adam, they have a biography of pre-Adamites. Solomon is the monarch of all necromancy, and Moses a prophet inferior only to Christ and Mohammed. Zuleika is the Persian name of Potiphar's wife; and her amour with Joseph constitutes one of the finest poems in their language. It is, therefore, no violation of costume to put the names of Cain, or Noah, into the mouth of a Moslem.

And Paswan's rebel hordes attest*
How little love they bore such guest:
His death is all I need relate,
The stern effect of Giaffir's hate;
And how my birth disclosed to me,
Whate'er beside it makes, hath made me free.

XIV.

"When Paswan, after years of strife,
At last for power, but first for life,
In Widdin's walls too proudly sate,
Our Pachas rallied round the state;
Nor last nor least in high command,
Each brother led a separate band;
They gave their horse-tails to the wind,†
And mustering in Sophia's plain
Their tents were pitch'd, their posts assign'd;
To one, alas! assign'd in vain!
What need of words? the deadly bowl,
By Giaffir's order drugg'd and given,
With venom subtle as his soul,
Dismiss'd Abdallah's hence to heaven.
Reclined and feverish in the bath,
He, when the hunter's sport was up,
But little deem'd a brother's wrath
To quench his thirst had such a cup:
The bowl a bribed attendant bore;
He drank one draught, nor needed more!‡
If thou my tale, Zulcika, doubt,
Call Haroun—he can tell it out.

XV.

"The deed once done, and Paswan's feud
In part suppress'd, though ne'er subdued,
Abdallah's Pachalic was gain'd:—
Thou know'st not what in our Divan
Can wealth procure for worse than man—
Abdallah's honors were obtain'd
By him a brother's murder stain'd;
'Tis true, the purchase nearly drain'd
His ill-got treasure, soon replaced.
Wouldst question whence? Survey the waste,
And ask the squalid peasant how
His gains repay his broiling brow!—
Why me the stern usurper spared,
Why thus with me his palace shared,
I know not. Shame, regret, remorse,
And little fear from infant's force;

* Paswan Oglou, the rebel of Widdin; who, for the last years of his life, set the whole power of the Porte at defiance.

† "Horse-tail," the standard of a Pacha.

‡ Giaffir, Pacha of Argyro Castro, or Scutari, I am not sure which, was actually taken off by the Albanian Ali, in the manner described in the text. Ali Pacha, while I was in the country, married the daughter of his victim, some years after the event had taken place at a bath in Sophia, or Adrianople. The poison was mixed in the cup of coffee which is presented before the sherbet by the bath-keeper, after dressing.

Besides, adoption as a son
By him whom Heaven accorded none,
Or some unknown cabal, caprice,
Preserved me thus; but not in peace:
He cannot curb his haughty mood,
Nor I forgive a father's blood!

XVI.

"Within thy father's house are foes;
Not all who break his bread are true:
To these should I my birth disclose,
His days, his very hours, were few:
They only want a heart to lead,
A hand to point them to the deed.
But Haroun only knows—or knew—
This tale, whose close is almost nigh:
He in Abdallah's palace grew,
And held that post in his Serai
Which he holds here—he saw him die:
But what could single slavery do?
Avenge his lord? alas! too late;
Or save his son from such a fate?
He chose the last, and when elate
With foes subdued, or friends betray'd,
Proud Giaffir in high triumph sate,
He led me helpless to his gate,
And not in vain it seems essay'd
To save the life for which he pray'd.
The knowledge of my birth secured
From all and each, but most from me;
Thus Giaffir's safety was insured.
Removed he too from Roumelie
To this our Asiatic side,
Far from our seats by Danube's tide,
With none but Haroun, who retains
Such knowledge—and that Nubian feels
A tyrant's secrets are but chains,
From which the captive gladly steals,
And this and more to me reveals:
Such still to guilt just Allah sends—
Slaves, tools, accomplices—no friends!

XVII.

"All this, Zuleika, harshly sounds;
But harsher still my tale must be:
Howe'er my tongue thy softness wounds,
Yet I must prove all truth to thee.
I saw thee start this garb to see,
Yet is it one I oft have worn,
And long must wear: this Galiongée,
To whom thy plighted vow is sworn,
Is leader of those pirate hordes,
Whose laws and lives are on their swords;
To hear whose desolating tale
Would make thy waning cheek more pale:

Those arms thou see'st my band have brought,
The hands that wield are not remote;
This cup too for the rugged knaves
Is fill'd—once quaff'd, they ne'er repine:
Our Prophet might forgive the slaves;
They 're only infidels in wine!

XVIII.

"What could I be? Proscribed at home,
And taunted to a wish to roam;
And listless left—for Giaffir's fear
Denied the courser and the spear—
Though oft—oh, Mohammed! how oft!—
In full Divan the despot scoff'd,
As if *my* weak unwilling hand
Refused the bridle or the brand:
He ever went to war alone,
And pent me here untried—unknown;
To Haroun's care with women left,
By hope unblest, of fame bereft.
While thou—whose softness long endear'd,
Though it unmann'd me, still had cheer'd—
To Brusa's walls for safety sent,
Awaitedst there the field's event.
Haroun, who saw my spirit pining
Beneath inaction's sluggish yoke,
His captive, though with dread, resigning,
My thraldom for a season broke,
On promise to return before
The day when Giaffir's charge was o'er.
'Tis vain—my tongue can not impart
My almost drunkenness of heart,
When first this liberated eye
Survey'd Earth, Ocean, Sun, and Sky,
As if my spirit pierced them through,
And all their inmost wonders knew!
One word alone can paint to thee
That more than feeling—I was Free!
E'en for thy presence ceased to pine;
The World—nay—Heaven itself was mine!

XIX.

"The shallop of a trusty Moor
Convey'd me from this idle shore;
I long'd to see the isles that gem
Old Ocean's purple diadem:
I sought by turns, and saw them all:*
But when and where I join'd the crew,
With whom I'm pledged to rise or fall,
When all that we design to do
Is done, 'twill then be time more meet
To tell thee, when the tale 's complete.

* The Turkish notions of almost all islands are confined to the Archipelago, the sea alluded to.

XX.

"'Tis true, they are a lawless brood,
But rough in form, nor mild in mood;
And every creed, and every race,
With them hath found—may find—a place:
But open speech, and ready hand,
Obedience to their chief's command;
A soul for every enterprise,
That never sees with terror's eyes;
Friendship for each, and faith to all,
And vengeance vow'd for those who fall,
Have made them fitting instruments
For more than e'en my own intents.
And some—and I have studied all
Distinguish'd from the vulgar rank,
But chiefly to my council call
The wisdom of the cautious Frank—
And some to higher thoughts aspire,
The last of Lambro's patriots there*
Anticipated freedom share;
And oft around the cavern-fire
On visionary schemes debate,
To snatch the Rayahs from their fate.†
So let them ease their hearts with prate
Of equal rights, which man ne'er knew;
I have a love for freedom too.
Ay! let me like the ocean-Patriarch roam,‡
Or only know on land the Tartar's home! §
My tent on shore, my galley on the sea,
Are more than cities and Serais to me:
Borne by my steed, or wafted by my sail,
Across the desert, or before the gale,
Bound where thou wilt, my barb! or glide, my prow!
But be the star that guides the wanderer, Thou!
Thou, my Zulcika! share and bless my bark;
The Dove of peace and promise to mine ark!
Or, since that hope denied in worlds of strife,
Be thou the rainbow to the storms of life!
The evening beam that smiles the cloud away,
And tints to-morrow with prophetic ray!
Blest—as the Muezzin's strain from Mecca's wall
To pilgrims pure and prostrate at his call;
Soft—as the melody of youthful days,
That steals the trembling tear of speechless praise;

* Lambro Canzani, a Greek, famous for his efforts in 1789-90, for the independence of his country. Abandoned by the Russians, he became a pirate, and the Archipelago was the scene of his enterprises. He is said to be still alive at St. Petersburg. He and Riga are the two most celebrated of the Greek revolutionists.

† "Rayahs," all who pay the capitation tax, called the "Haratch."

‡ This first of voyages is one of the few with which the Mussulmans profess much acquaintance.

§ The wandering life of the Arabs, Tartars, and Turkomans, will be found well detailed in any book of Eastern travels. That it possesses a charm peculiar to itself, cannot be denied. A young French renegado confessed to Chateaubriand that he never found himself alone, galloping in the desert, without a sensation approaching to rapture which was indescribable.

Dear—as his native song to exile's ears,
Shall sound each tone thy long-loved voice endears.
For thee in those bright isles is built a bower
Blooming as Aden in its earliest hour.*
A thousand swords, with Selim's heart and hand,
Wait—wave—defend—destroy—at thy command!
Girt by my band, Zulcika at my side,
The spoil of nations shall bedeck my bride.
The Harem's languid years of listless ease
Are well resign'd for cares—for joys like these:
Not blind to fate, I see, where'er I rove,
Unnumber'd perils—but one only love!
Yet well my toils shall that fond breast repay,
Though fortune frown or falser friends betray.
How dear the dream in darkest hours of ill,
Should all be changed, to find thee faithful still!
Be but thy soul, like Selim's, firmly shown;
To thee be Selim's tender as thine own;
To soothe each sorrow, share in each delight,
Blend every thought, do all—but disunite!
Once free, 'tis mine our horde again to guide;
Friends to each other, foes to all beside:
Yet there we follow but the bent assign'd
By fatal Nature to man's warring kind:
Mark! where his carnage and his conquests cease!
He makes a solitude, and calls it—peace!
I like the rest must use my skill or strength,
But ask no land beyond my sabre's length:
Power sways but by division—her resource
The blest alternative of fraud or force!
Ours be the last; in time deceit may come
When cities cage us in a social home:
There e'en thy soul might err—how oft the heart
Corruption shakes which peril could not part!
And woman, more than man, when death or woe,
Or even disgrace, would lay her lover low,
Sunk in the lap of luxury will shame—
Away suspicion!—*not* Zulcika's name!
But life is hazard at the best; and here
No more remains to win, and much to fear:
Yes, fear!—the doubt, the dread of losing thee,
By Osman's power, and Giaffir's stern decree.
That dread shall vanish with the favoring gale,
Which Love to-night hath promised to my sail:
No danger daunts the pair his smile hath blest,
Their steps still roving, but their hearts at rest.
With thee all toils are sweet, each clime hath charms;
Earth—sea alike—our world within our arms!
Ay—let the loud winds whistle o'er the deck,
So that those arms cling closer round my neck:
The deepest murmur of this lip shall be
No sigh for safety, but a prayer for thee!
The war of elements no fears impart
To Love, whose deadliest bane is human Art:

* "Jannat al Aden," the perpetual abode, the Mussulman paradise.

"Oh! — no more — yet now my more than brother!"
Page 121.

There lie the only rocks our course can check;
Here moments menace—*there* are years of wreck!
But hence ye thoughts that rise in Horror's shape!
This hour bestows, or ever bars escape.
Few words remain of mine my tale to close:
Of thine but *one* to waft us from our foes;
Yea—foes—to me will Giaffir's hate decline?
And is not Osman, who would part us, thine?

XXI.

"His head and faith from doubt and death
Return'd in time my guard to save;
Few heard, none told, that o'er the wave
From isle to isle I roved the while:
And since, though parted from my band,
Too seldom now I leave the land,
No deed they've done, nor deed shall do,
Ere I have heard and doom'd it too:
I form the plan, decree the spoil,
'Tis fit I oftener share the toil.
But now too long I've held thine ear;
Time presses, floats my bark, and here
We leave behind but hate and fear.
To-morrow Osman with his train
Arrives—to-night must break thy chain:
And wouldst thou save that haughty Boy,
Perchance, *his* life who gave thee thine,
With me this hour away—away!
But yet, though thou art plighted mine,
Wouldst thou recall thy willing vow,
Appall'd by truth imparted now,
Here rest I—not to see thee wed:
But be that peril on *my* head!"

XXII.

Zulcika, mute and motionless,
Stood like that statue of distress,
When, her last hope for ever gone,
The mother harden'd into stone;
All in the maid that eye could see
Was but a younger Niobè.
But ere her lip, or e'en her eye,
Essay'd to speak, or look reply,
Beneath the garden's wicket porch
Far flash'd on high a blazing torch!
Another—and another—and another—
"Oh!—no more—yet now my more than brother!"
Far, wide, through every thicket spread,
The fearful lights are gleaming red;
Nor these alone—for each right hand
Is ready with a sheathless brand.
They part, pursue, return, and wheel
With searching flambeau, shining steel;
And last of all, his sabre waving,
Stern Giaffir in his fury raving:

And now almost they touch the cave—
Oh! must that grot be Selim's grave?

XXIII.

Dauntless he stood—"'Tis come—soon past—
One kiss, Zuleika—'tis my last:
But yet my band not far from shore
May hear this signal, see the flash;
Yet now too few—the attempt were rash:
No matter—yet one effort more."
Forth to the cavern mouth he stept;
His pistol's echo rang on high,
Zuleika started not nor wept,
Despair benumb'd her breast and eye!—
"They hear me not, or if they ply
Their oars, 'tis but to see me die;
That sound hath drawn my foes more nigh.
Then forth my father's scimitar,
Thou ne'er hast seen less equal war!
Farewell, Zuleika!—Sweet! retire:
Yet stay within—here linger safe,
At thee his rage will only chafe.
Stir not—lest even to thee perchance
Some erring blade or ball should glance.
Fear'st thou for him?—may I expire
If in this strife I seek thy sire!
No—though by him that poison pour'd:
No—though again he call me coward!
But tamely shall I meet their steel?
No—as each crest save *his* may feel!"

XXIV.

One bound he made, and gain'd the sand:
Already at his feet hath sunk
The foremost of the prying band,
A gasping head, a quivering trunk:
Another falls—but round him close
A swarming circle of his foes;
From right to left his path he cleft,
And almost met the meeting wave:
His boat appears—not five oars' length—
His comrades strain with desperate strength—
Oh! are they yet in time to save?
His feet the foremost breakers lave;
His band are plunging in the bay,
Their sabres glitter through the spray;
Wet—wild—unwearied to the strand
They struggle—now they touch the land!
They come—'tis but to add to slaughter—
His heart's best blood is on the water!

XXV.

Escaped from shot, unharm'd by steel,
Or scarcely grazed its force to feel,
Had Selim won, betray'd, beset,
To where the strand and billows met:

There as his last step left the land,
And the last death-blow dealt his hand—
Ah! wherefore did he turn to look
For her his eye but sought in vain?
That pause, that fatal gaze he took,
Hath doom'd his death, or fix'd his chain.
Sad proof, in peril and in pain,
How late will Lover's hope remain!
His back was to the dashing spray;
Behind, but close, his comrades lay,
When, at the instant, hiss'd the ball—
"So may the foes of Giaffir fall!"
Whose voice is heard? whose carbine rang?
Whose bullet through the night-air sang,
Too nearly, deadly aim'd to err?
'Tis thine—Abdallah's Murderer!
The father slowly rued thy hate,
The son hath found a quicker fate:
Fast from his breast the blood is bubbling,
The whiteness of the sea-foam troubling—
If aught his lips essay'd to groan,
The rushing billows choked the tone!

XXVI.

Morn slowly rolls the clouds away;
Few trophies of the fight are there:
The shouts that shook the midnight-bay
Are silent; but some signs of fray
That strand of strife may bear,
And fragments of each shiver'd brand;
Steps stamp'd; and dash'd into the sand
The print of many a struggling hand
May there be mark'd; nor far remote
A broken torch, an oarless boat;
And tangled on the weeds that heap
The beach where shelving to the deep
There lies a white capote!
'Tis rent in twain—one dark-red stain
The wave yet ripples o'er in vain:
But where is he who wore?
Ye! who would o'er his relics weep,
Go, seek them where the surges sweep
Their burden round Sigæum's steep,
And cast on Lemnos' shore:
The sea-birds shriek above the prey,
O'er which their hungry beaks delay,
As shaken on his restless pillow,
His head heaves with the heaving billow;
That hand, whose motion is not life,
Yet feebly seems to menace strife,
Flung by the tossing tide on high,
Then levell'd with the wave—
What recks it, though that corse shall lie
Within a living grave?
The bird that tears that prostrate form
Hath only robb'd the meaner worm:

The only heart, the only eye
Had bled or wept to see him die,
Had seen those scatter'd limbs composed,
And mourn'd above his turban-stone,*
That heart hath burst—that eye was closed—
Yea—closed before his own!

XXVII.

By Helle's stream there is a voice of wail!
And woman's eye is wet—man's cheek is pale:
Zuleika! last of Giaffir's race,
Thy destined lord is come too late:
He sees not—ne'er shall see—thy face!
Can he not hear
The loud Wul-wulleh warn his distant ear?†
Thy handmaids weeping at the gate,
The Koran-chanters of the hymn of fate,
The silent slaves with folded arms that wait,
Sighs in the hall, and shrieks upon the gale,
Tell him thy tale!
Thou didst not view thy Selim fall!
That fearful moment when he left the cave
Thy heart grew chill:
He was thy hope—thy joy—thy love—thine all—
And that last thought on him thou couldst not save
Sufficed to kill;
Burst forth in one wild cry—and all was still.
Peace to thy broken heart, and virgin grave!
Ah! happy! but of life to lose the worst!
That grief—though deep—though fatal—was thy first!
Thrice happy! ne'er to feel nor fear the force
Of absence, shame, pride, hate, revenge, remorse:
And, oh! that pang where more than madness lies!
The worm that will not sleep—and never dies;
Thought of the gloomy day and ghastly night,
That dreads the darkness, and yet loathes the light,
That winds around, and tears the quivering heart!
Ah! wherefore not consume it—and depart!
Woe to thee, rash and unrelenting chief!
Vainly thou heap'st the dust upon thy head,
Vainly the sackcloth o'er thy limbs doth spread;
By that same hand Abdallah—Selim—bled.
Now let it tear thy beard in idle grief:
Thy pride of heart, thy bride for Osman's bed,
She, whom thy Sultan had but seen to wed,
Thy Daughter's dead!
Hope of thine age, thy twilight's lonely beam,
The star hath set that shone on Helle's stream.
What quench'd its ray?—the blood that thou hast shed!
Hark! to the hurried question of Despair:
"Where is my child?"—an Echo answers—"Where?"‡

* A turban is carved in stone above the graves of *men* only.

† The death-song of the Turkish women. The "silent slaves" are the men, whose notions of decorum forbid complaint in *public*.

‡ "I came to the place of my birth, and cried, 'The friends of my youth, where are they?' and an Echo answered, 'Where are they?'"—*From an Arabic MS.*
The above quotation (from which the idea in the text is taken) must be already

XXVIII.

Within the place of thousand tombs
That shine beneath, while dark above
The sad but living cypress glooms,
And withers not, though branch and leaf
Are stamp'd with an eternal grief,
Like early unrequited Love,
One spot exists, which ever blooms,
E'en in that deadly grove—
A single rose is shedding there
Its lonely lustre, meek and pale:
It looks as planted by Despair—
So white—so faint—the slightest gale
Might whirl the leaves on high;
And yet, though storms and blight assail,
And hands more rude than wintry sky
May wring it from the stem—in vain—
To-morrow sees it bloom again!
The stalk some spirit gently rears,
And waters with celestial tears;
For well may maids of Helle deem
That this can be no earthly flower,
Which mocks the tempest's withering hour,
And buds unsheltered by a bower;
Nor droops, though spring refuse her shower,
Nor wooes the summer beam:
To it the livelong night there sings
A bird unseen—but not remote:
Invisible his airy wings,
But soft as harp that Houri strings
His long entrancing note!
It were the Bulbul; but his throat,
Though mournful, pours not such a strain:
For they who listen cannot leave
The spot, but linger there and grieve,
As if they loved in vain!
And yet so sweet the tears they shed,
'Tis sorrow so unmix'd with dread,
They scarce can bear the morn to break
That melancholy spell,
And longer yet would weep and wake,
He sings so wild and well!
But when the day-blush bursts from high
Expires that magic melody.
And some have been who could believe,
(So fondly youthful dreams deceive,
Yet harsh be they that blame,)
That note so piercing and profound
Will shape and syllable its sound
Into Zulcika's name.*

familiar to every reader—it is given in the first annotation, p. 67, of "The Pleasures of Memory;" a poem so well known as to render a reference almost superfluous, but to whose pages all will be delighted to recur.

* "And airy tongues that *syllable* men's names."—MILTON.

For a belief that the souls of the dead inhabit the form of birds, we need not travel to the East. Lord Lyttelton's ghost story, the belief of the Duchess of

'Tis from her cypress' summit heard,
That melts in air the liquid word;
'Tis from her lowly virgin earth
That white rose takes its tender birth.
There late was laid a marble stone;
Eve saw it placed—the Morrow gone!
It was no mortal arm that bore
That deep fixed pillar to the shore;
For there, as Helle's legends tell,
Next morn 'twas found where Selim fell;
Lash'd by the tumbling tide, whose wave
Denied his bones a holier grave:
And there by night, reclined, 'tis said,
Is seen a ghastly turban'd head:
And hence extended by the billow,
'Tis named the "Pirate-phantom's pillow!"
Where first it lay that mourning flower
Hath flourish'd; flourisheth this hour,
Alone and dewy, coldly pure and pale;
As weeping Beauty's cheek at Sorrow's tale!

Kendal, that George I. flew into her window in the shape of a raven (see Orford's "Reminiscences"), and many other instances, bring this superstition nearer home. The most singular was the whim of a Worcester lady, who, believing her daughter to exist in the shape of a singing-bird, literally furnished her pew in the cathedral with cages full of the kind; and as she was rich, and a benefactress in beautifying the church, no objection was made to her harmless folly. For this anecdote, see Orford's "Letters."

THE SIEGE OF CORINTH.

TO

JOHN HOBHOUSE, ESQ.,

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED

BY HIS

FRIEND.

JANUARY 22, 1816.

ADVERTISEMENT.

"THE grand army of the Turks, (in 1715,) under the Prime Vizier, to open to themselves a way into the heart of the Morea, and to form the siege of Napoli di Romania, the most considerable place in all that country,* thought it best in the first place to attack Corinth, upon which they made several storms. The garrison being weakened, and the governor seeing it was impossible to hold out against so mighty a force, thought it fit to beat a parley; but while they were treating about the articles, one of the magazines in the Turkish army, wherein they had six hundred barrels of powder, blew up by accident, whereby six or seven hundred men were killed; which so enraged the infidels, that they would not grant any capitulation, but stormed the place with so much fury, that they took it, and put most of the garrison, with Signior Minotti, the governor, to the sword. The rest, with Antonio Bembo, proveditor extraordinary, were made prisoners of war."—*History of the Turks*, vol. iii. p. 151.

* Napoli di Romania is not now the most considerable place in the Morea, but Tripolitza, where the Pacha resides, and maintains his government. Napoli is near Argos. I visited all three in 1810-11; and, in the course of journeying through the country from my first arrival in 1809, I crossed the Isthmus eight times in my way from Attica to the Morea, over the mountains, or in the other direction, when passing from the Gulf of Athens to that of Lepanto. Both the routes are picturesque and beautiful, though very different: that by sea has more sameness; but the voyage being always within sight of land, and often very near it, presents many attractive views of the islands Salamis, Ægina, Poro, &c., and the coast of the continent.

THE SIEGE OF CORINTH.

I.

MANY a vanish'd year and age,
And tempest's breath, and battle's rage,
Have swept o'er Corinth; yet she stands
A fortress form'd to Freedom's hands.
The whirlwind's wrath, the earthquake's shock
Have left untouch'd her hoary rock,
The keystone of a land, which still,
Though fall'n, looks proudly on that hill,
The landmark to the double tide
That purpling rolls on either side,
As if their waters chafed to meet,
Yet pause and crouch beneath her feet.
But could the blood before her shed
Since first Timoleon's brother bled,
Or baffled Persia's despot fled,
Arise from out the earth which drank
The stream of slaughter as it sank,
That sanguine ocean would o'erflow
Her isthmus idly spread below:
Or could the bones of all the slain,
Who perish'd there, be piled again,
That rival pyramid would rise
More mountain-like, through those clear skies,
Than yon tower-capp'd Acropolis,
Which seems the very clouds to kiss.

II.

On dun Cithæron's ridge appears
The gleam of twice ten thousand spears;
And downward to the Isthmian plain,
From shore to shore of either main,
The tent is pitch'd, the Crescent shines
Along the Moslem's leaguering lines;
And the dusk Spahis' bands advance
Beneath each bearded pacha's glance;
And far and wide as eye can reach
The turban'd cohorts throng the beach;
And there the Arab's camel kneels,
And there his steed the Tartar wheels;

The Turcoman hath left his herd,*
The sabre round his loins to gird;
And there the volleying thunders pour,
Till waves grow smoother to the roar.
The trench is dug, the cannon's breath
Wings the far hissing globe of death;
Fast whirl the fragments from the wall,
Which crumbles with the ponderous ball;
And from that wall the foe replies,
O'er dusty plain and smoky skies,
With fires that answer fast and well
The summons of the Infidel.

III.

But near and nearest to the wall
Of those who wish and work its fall,
With deeper skill in war's black art
Than Othman's sons, and high of heart
As any chief that ever stood
Triumphant in the fields of blood;
From post to post, and deed to deed,
Fast spurring on his reeking steed,
Where sallying ranks the trench assail,
And make the foremost Moslem quail;
Or where the battery, guarded well,
Remains as yet impregnable,
Alighting cheerly to inspire
The soldier slackening in his fire;
The first and freshest of the host
Which Stamboul's Sultan there can boast,
To guide the follower o'er the field,
To point the tube, the lance to wield,
Or whirl around the bickering blade;—
Was Alp, the Adrian renegade!

IV.

From Venice—once a race of worth
His gentle sires—he drew his birth;
But late an exile from her shore,
Against his countrymen he bore
The arms they taught to bear; and now
The turban girt his shaven brow.
Through many a change had Corinth pass'd
With Greece to Venice' rule at last;
And here, before her walls, with those
To Greece and Venice equal foes,
He stood a foe, with all the zeal
Which young and fiery converts feel,
Within whose heated bosom throngs
The memory of a thousand wrongs.
To him had Venice ceased to be
Her ancient civic boast—"the Free;"

* The life of the Turcomans is wandering and patriarchal: they dwell in tents.

And in the palace of St. Mark
Unnamed accusers in the dark
Within the "Lion's mouth" had placed
A charge against him uneffaced:
He fled in time, and saved his life,
To waste his future years in strife,
That taught his land how great her loss
In him who triumph'd o'er the Cross,
'Gainst which he rear'd the Crescent high,
And battled to avenge or die.

V.

Coumourgi—he whose closing scene *
Adorn'd the triumph of Eugene,
When on Carlowitz' bloody plain,
The last and mightiest of the slain,
He sank, regretting not to die,
But cursed the Christian's victory—
Coumourgi—can his glory cease,
That latest conqueror of Greece,
Till Christian hands to Greece restore
The freedom Venice gave of yore?
A hundred years have roll'd away
Since he relix'd the Moslem's sway,
And now he led the Mussulman,
And gave the guidance of the van
To Alp, who well repaid the trust
By cities levell'd with the dust;
And proved, by many a deed of death,
How firm his heart in novel faith.

VI.

The walls grew weak; and fast and hot
Against them pour'd the ceaseless shot,
With unabating fury sent,
From battery to battlement;
And thunder-like the pealing din
Rose from each heated culverin;
And here and there some crackling dome
Was fired before the exploding bomb:
And as the fabric sank beneath
The shattering shell's volcanic breath,
In red and wreathing columns flash'd
The flame, as loud the ruin crash'd,
Or into countless meteors driven,
Its earth-stars melted into heaven;

* Ali Coumourgi, the favorite of three sultans, and Grand Vizier to Achmet III., after recovering Peloponnesus from the Venetians in one campaign, was mortally wounded in the next, against the Germans, at the battle of Peterwardein (in the plain of Carlowitz), in Hungary, endeavoring to rally his guards. He died of his wounds next day. His last order was the decapitation of General Breuner, and some other German prisoners; and his last words, "Oh that I could thus serve all the Christian dogs!" a speech and act not unlike one of Caligula. He was a young man of great ambition and unbounded presumption: on being told that Prince Eugene, then opposed to him, "was a great general," he said, "I shall become a greater, and at his expense."

Whose clouds that day grew doubly dun
Impervious to the hidden sun,
With volumed smoke that slowly grew
To one wide sky of sulphurous hue.

VII.

But not for vengeance, long delay'd,
Alone, did Alp, the renegade,
The Moslem warriors sternly teach
His skill to pierce the promised breach:
Within those walls a maid was pent
His hope would win, without consent
Of that inexorable sire,
Whose heart refused him in its ire,
When Alp, beneath his Christian name,
Her virgin hand aspired to claim.
In happier mood, and earlier time,
While unimpeach'd for traitorous crime,
Gayest in gondola or hall,
He glitter'd through the Carnival;
And tuned the softest serenade
That e'er on Adria's waters play'd
At midnight to Italian maid.

VIII.

And many deem'd her heart was won;
For sought by numbers, given to none,
Had young Francesca's hand remain'd
Still by the church's bonds unchain'd:
And when the Adriatic bore
Lanciotto to the Paynim shore,
Her wonted smiles were seen to fail,
And pensive wax'd the maid and pale;
More constant at confessional,
More rare at masque and festival;
Or seen at such with downcast eyes,
Which conquer'd hearts they ceased to prize!
With listless look she seems to gaze;
With humbler care her form arrays;
Her voice less lively in the song;
Her step, though light, less fleet among
The pairs, on whom the Morning's glance
Breaks, yet unsated with the dance.

IX.

Sent by the state to guard the land,
(Which, wrested from the Moslem's hand,
While Sobieski tamed his pride
By Buda's wall and Danube's side,
The chiefs of Venice wrung away
From Patra to Eubœa's bay,)
Minotti held in Corinth's towers
The Doge's delegated powers,
While yet the pitying eye of Peace
Smiled o'er her long-forgotten Greece:
And ere that faithless truce was broke
Which freed her from the unchristian yoke,

With him his gentle daughter came;
Nor there, since Menelaus' dame
Forsook her lord and land, to prove
What woes await on lawless love,
Had fairer form adorn'd the shore
Than she, the matchless stranger, bore.

X.

The wall is rent, the ruins yawn,
And, with to-morrow's earliest dawn,
O'er the disjointed mass shall vault
The foremost of the fierce assault.
The bands are rank'd; the chosen van
Of Tartar and of Mussulman,
The full of hope, misnamed "forlorn,"
Who hold the thought of death in scorn,
And win their way with falchion's force,
Or pave the path with many a corse,
O'er which the following brave may rise,
Their stepping-stone—the last who dies!

XI.

'Tis midnight: on the mountains brown
The cold, round moon shines deeply down:
Blue roll the waters, blue the sky
Spreads like an ocean hung on high,
Bespangled with those isles of light,
So wildly, spiritually bright;
Who ever gazed upon them shining,
And turn'd to earth without repining,
Nor wish'd for wings to flee away,
And mix with their eternal ray?
The waves on either shore lay there,
Calm, clear, and azure as the air;
And scarce their foam the pebbles shook,
But murmur'd meekly as the brook.
The winds were pillow'd on the waves;
The banners droop'd along their staves,
And, as they fell around them furling,
Above them shone the crescent curling;
And that deep silence was unbroke,
Save where the watch his signal spoke,
Save where the steed neigh'd oft and shrill,
And echo answer'd from the hill,
And the wide hum of that wild host
Rustled like leaves from coast to coast,
As rose the Muezzin's voice in air
In midnight call to wonted prayer;
It rose, that chanted mournful strain,
Like some lone spirit's o'er the plain:
'Twas musical, but sadly sweet,
Such as when winds and harp-strings meet,
And take a long unmeasured tone,
To mortal minstrelsy unknown.
It seem'd to those within the wall
A cry prophetic of their fall:

It struck even the besiegers' ear
With something ominous and drear,
An undefined and sudden thrill,
Which makes the heart a moment still,
Then beat with quicker pulse, ashamed
Of that strange sense its silence framed:
Such as a sudden passing-bell
Wakes, though but for a stranger's knell.

XII.

The tent of Alp was on the shore;
The sound was hush'd, the prayer was o'er;
The watch was set, the night-round made,
All mandates issued and obey'd:
'Tis but another anxious night,
His pains the morrow may requite
With all revenge and love can pay,
In guerdon for their long delay.
Few hours remain, and he hath need
Of rest, to nerve for many a deed
Of slaughter; but within his soul
The thoughts like troubled waters roll.
He stood alone among the host;
Not his the loud fanatic boast
To plant the Crescent o'er the Cross,
Or risk a life with little loss,
Secure in Paradise to be
By Houris loved immortally:
Nor his, what burning patriots feel
The stern exaltedness of zeal,
Profuse of blood, untired in toil,
When battling on the parent soil.
He stood alone—a renegade
Against the country he betray'd.
He stood alone amidst his band,
Without a trusted heart or hand:
They follow'd him, for he was brave,
And great the spoil he got and gave;
They crouch'd to him, for he had skill
To warp and wield the vulgar will:
But still his Christian origin
With them was little less than sin.
They envied even the faithless fame
He earn'd beneath a Moslem name:
Since he, their mightiest chief, had been
In youth, a bitter Nazarene.
They did not know how pride can stoop,
When baffled feelings withering droop;
They did not know how hate can burn
In hearts once changed from soft to stern;
Nor all the false and fatal zeal
The convert of revenge can feel.
He ruled them—man may rule the worst;
By ever daring to be first:
So lions o'er the jackal sway;
The jackal points, he fells the prey,

Then on the vulgar yelling press,
To gorge the relics of success.

XIII.

His head grows fever'd, and his pulse
The quick successive throbs convulse;
In vain from side to side he throws
His form, in courtship of repose;
Or if he dozed, a sound, a start
Awoke him with a sunken heart.
The turban on his hot brow press'd,
The mail weigh'd lead-like on his breast,
Though oft and long beneath its weight
Upon his eyes had slumber sate,
Without or couch or canopy,
Except a rougher field and sky
Than now might yield a warrior's bed,
Than now along the heaven was spread.
He could not rest, he could not stay
Within his tent to wait for day,
But walk'd him forth along the sand,
Where thousand sleepers strew'd the strand.
What pillow'd them? and why should he
More wakeful than the humblest be?
Since more their peril, worse their toil,
And yet they fearless dream of spoil;
While he alone, where thousands pass'd
A night of sleep, perchance their last,
In sickly vigil wander'd on,
And envied all he gazed upon.

XIV.

He felt his soul become more light
Beneath the freshness of the night.
Cool was the silent sky, though calm,
And bathed his brow with airy balm:
Behind, the camp—before him lay,
In many a winding creek and bay,
Lepanto's gulf; and on the brow
Of Delphi's hill, unshaken snow,
High and eternal, such as shone
Through thousand summers brightly gone,
Along the gulf, the mount, the clime;
It will not melt, like man, to time:
Tyrant and slave are swept away,
Less form'd to wear before the ray;
But that white veil, the lightest, frailest,
Which on the mighty mount thou hailest,
While tower and tree are torn and rent,
Shines o'er its craggy battlement;
In form a peak, in height a cloud,
In texture like a hovering shroud,
Thus high by parting Freedom spread,
As from her fond abode she fled,
And linger'd on the spot, where long
Her prophet spirit spake in song.

Oh! still her step at moments falters
O'er wither'd fields and ruin'd altars,
And fain would wake, in souls too broken,
By pointing to each glorious token.
But vain her voice, till better days
Dawn in those yet remember'd rays,
Which shone upon the Persian flying,
And saw the Spartan smile in dying.

XV.

Not mindless of these mighty times
Was Alp, despite his flight and crimes;
And through this night, as on he wander'd,
And o'er the past and present ponder'd,
And thought upon the glorious dead
Who there in better cause had bled,
He felt how faint and feebly dim
The fame that could accrue to him,
Who cheer'd the band, and waved the sword
A traitor in a turban'd horde;
And led them to the lawless siege,
Whose best success were sacrilege.
Not so had those his fancy number'd,
The chiefs whose dust around him slumber'd;
Their phalanx marshall'd on the plain,
Whose bulwarks were not then in vain.
They fell devoted, but undying;
The very gale their names seem'd sighing:
The waters murmur'd of their name;
The woods were peopled with their fame;
The silent pillar, lone and gray,
Claim'd kindred with their sacred clay;
Their spirits wrapt the dusky mountain,
Their memory sparkled o'er the fountain;
The meanest rill, the mightiest river,
Roll'd mingling with their fame for ever.
Despite of every yoke she bears,
That land is glory's still, and theirs!
'Tis still a watchword to the earth:
When man would do a deed of worth
He points to Greece, and turns to tread,
So sanction'd, on the tyrant's head:
He looks to her, and rushes on
Where life is lost, or freedom won.

XVI.

Still by the shore Alp mutely mused,
And woo'd the freshness night diffused.
There shrinks no ebb in that tideless sea,*
Which changeless rolls eternally;
So that wildest of waves, in their angriest mood,
Scarce break on the bounds of the land for a rood;
And the powerless moon beholds them flow,
Heedless if she come or go:

* The reader need hardly be reminded that there are no perceptible tides in the Mediterranean.

Calm or high, in main or bay,
On their course she hath no sway.
The rock unworn its base doth bare,
And looks o'er the surf, but it comes not there;
And the fringe of the foam may be seen below,
On the line that it left long ages ago:
A smooth short space of yellow sand
Between it and the greener land.

He wander'd on, along the beach,
Till within the range of a carbine's reach
Of the leaguer'd wall; but they saw him not,
Or how could he 'scape from the hostile shot,
Did traitors lurk in the Christian's hold?
Were their hands grown stiff, or their hearts wax'd cold,
I know not, in sooth; but from yonder wall
There flash'd no fire, and there hiss'd no ball,
Though he stood beneath the bastion's frown,
That flank'd the seaward gate of the town;
Though he heard the sound, and could almost tell
The sullen words of the sentinel,
As his measured step on the stone below
Clank'd, as he paced it to and fro;
And he saw the lean dogs beneath the wall
Hold o'er the dead their carnival,
Gorging and growling o'er carcass and limb!
They were too busy to bark at him!
From a Tartar's skull they had stripp'd the flesh,
As ye peel the fig when its fruit is fresh;
And their white tusks crunch'd o'er the whiter skull,*
As it slipp'd through their jaws, when their edge grew dull,
As they lazily mumbled the bones of the dead,
When they scarce could rise from the spot where they fed;
So well had they broken a lingering fast
With those who had fall'n for that night's repast.
And Alp knew, by the turbans that roll'd on the sand,
The foremost of these were the best of his band:
Crimson and green were the shawls of their wear,
And each scalp had a single long tuft of hair,†
All the rest was shaven and bare.
The scalps were in the wild-dog's maw,
The hair was tangled round his jaw.
But close by the shore, on the edge of the gulf,
There sat a vulture flapping a wolf,
Who had stolen from the hills, but kept away,
Scared by the dogs, from the human prey;
But he seized on his share of a steed that lay,
Pick'd by the birds, on the sands of the bay.

* This spectacle I have seen, such as described, beneath the wall of the Seraglio at Constantinople, in the little cavities worn by the Bosphorus in the rock, a narrow terrace of which projects between the wall and the water. I think the fact is also mentioned in Hobhouse's Travels. The bodies were probably those of some refractory Janizaries.

† This tuft, or long lock, is left from a superstition that Mohammed will draw them into paradise by it.

XVII.

Alp turn'd him from the sickening sight:
Never had shaken his nerves in fight;
But he better could brook to behold the dying,
Deep in the tide of their warm blood lying,
Scorch'd with the death-thirst, and writhing in vain,
Than the perishing dead who are past all pain.
There is something of pride in the perilous hour,
Whate'er be the shape in which death may lour;
For Fame is there to say who bleeds,
And Honor's eye on daring deeds!
But when all is past, it is humbling to tread
O'er the weltering field of the tombless dead,
And see worms of the earth, and fowls of the air,
Beasts of the forest, all gathering there;
All regarding man as their prey,
All rejoicing in his decay.

XVIII.

There is a temple in ruin stands,
Fashion'd by long-forgotten hands;
Two or three columns, and many a stone,
Marble and granite, with grass o'ergrown!
Out upon Time! it will leave no more
Of the things to come than the things before!
Out upon Time! who for ever will leave
But enough of the past for the future to grieve
O'er that which hath been, and o'er that which must be!
What we have seen, our sons shall see;
Remnants of things that have pass'd away,
Fragments of stone, rear'd by creatures of clay!

XIX.

He sate him down at a pillar's base,
And pass'd his hand athwart his face;
Like one in dreary musing mood,
Declining was his attitude;
His head was drooping on his breast,
Fever'd, throbbing, and opprest;
And o'er his brow, so downward bent,
Oft his beating fingers went,
Hurriedly, as you may see
Your own run over the ivory key,
Ere the measured tone is taken,
By the chords you would awaken.
There he sate all heavily,
As he heard the night-wind sigh.
Was it the wind, through some hollow stone,*

* I must here acknowledge a close, though unintentional, resemblance in these twelve lines to a passage in an unpublished poem of Mr. Coleridge, called "Christabel." It was not till after these lines were written that I heard that wild and singularly original and beautiful poem recited: and the MS. of that production I never saw till very recently, by the kindness of Mr. Coleridge himself, who, I hope, is convinced that I have not been a wilful plagiarist. The original idea undoubtedly pertains to Mr. Coleridge, whose poem has been composed above fourteen years. Let me conclude by a hope that he will not longer delay the publication of a production of which I can only add my mite of approbation to the applause of far more competent judges.

Sent that soft and tender mean?
He lifted his head, and he look'd on the sea,
But it was unrippled as glass may be;
He look'd on the long grass—it waved not a blade;
How was that gentle sound convey'd?
He look'd to the banners—each flag lay still,
So did the leaves on Citnæron's hill,
And he felt not a breath come over his cheek;
What did that sudden sound bespeak?
He turn'd to the left—is he sure of sight?
There sate a lady, youthful and bright!

XX.

He started up with more of fear
Than if an armed foe were near.
"God of my fathers! what is here?
Who art thou, and wherefore sent
So near a hostile armament?"
His trembling hands refused to sign
The cross he deem'd no more divine:
He had resumed it in that hour,
But conscience wrung away the power.
He gazed—he saw: he knew the face
Of beauty, and the form of grace;
It was Francesca by his side,
The maid who might have been his bride!

The rose was yet upon her cheek,
But mellow'd with a tenderer streak:
Where was the play of her soft lips fled?
Gone was the smile that enliven'd their red.
The ocean's calm within their view,
Beside her eye had less of blue;
But like that cold wave it stood still,
And its glance, though clear, was chill.
Around her form a thin robe twining,
Nought conceal'd her bosom shining;
Through the parting of her hair,
Floating darkly downward there,
Her rounded arm show'd white and bare:
And ere yet she made reply,
Once she raised her hand on high;
It was so wan and transparent of hue,
You might have seen the moon shine through.

XXI.

"I come from my rest to him I love best,
That I may be happy, and he may be blest.
I have pass'd the guards, the gate, the wall;
Sought thee in safety through foes and all.
'Tis said the lion will turn and flee
From a maid in the pride of her purity;
And the Power on high, that can shield the good
Thus from the tyrant of the wood,
Hath extended its mercy to guard me as well
From the hands of the leaguering infidel.

I come—and if I come in vain,
Never, oh never, we meet again!
Thou hast done a fearful deed
In falling away from thy fathers' creed:
But dash that turban to earth, and sign
The sign of the cross, and for ever be mine;
Wring the black drop from thy heart,
And to-morrow unites us no more to part."

"And where should our bridal-couch be spread?
In the midst of the dying and the dead?
For to-morrow we give to the slaughter and flame
The sons and the shrines of the Christian name.
None, save thou and thine, I've sworn,
Shall be left upon the morn:
But thee will I bear to a lovely spot,
Where our hands shall be join'd, and our sorrow forgot.
There thou yet shalt be my bride,
When once again I've quell'd the pride
Of Venice: and her hated race
Have felt the arm they would debase
Scourge, with a whip of scorpions, those
Whom vice and envy made my foes."

Upon his hand she laid her own—
Light was the touch, but it thrill'd to the bone,
And shot a chillness to his heart,
Which fix'd him beyond the power to start.
Though slight was that grasp so mortal cold,
He could not loose him from its hold:
But never did clasp of one so dear
Strike on the pulse with such feeling of fear,
As those thin fingers, long and white,
Froze through his blood by their touch that night.
The feverish glow of his brow was gone,
And his heart sank so still that it felt like stone,
As he look'd on the face, and beheld its hue,
So deeply changed from what he knew:
Fair but faint—without the ray
Of mind, that made each feature play
Like sparkling waves on a sunny day;
And her motionless lips lay still as death,
And her words came forth without her breath,
And there rose not a heave o'er her bosom's swell,
And there seem'd not a pulse in her veins to dwell.
Though her eye shone out, yet the lids were fix'd,
And the glance that it gave was wild and unmix'd
With aught of change, as the eyes may seem
Of the restless who walk in a troubled dream;
Like the figures on arras, that gloomily glare,
Stirr'd by the breath of the wintry air,
So seen by the dying lamp's fitful light,
Lifeless, but life-like, and awful to sight;
As they seem, through the dimness, about to come down
From the shadowy wall where their images frown;

Fearfully flitting to and fro,
As the gusts on the tapestry come and go.

"If not for the love of me be given
Thus much, then, for the love of Heaven,—
Again I say—that turban tear
From off thy faithless brow, and swear
Thine injured country's sons to spare,
Or thou art lost; and never shalt see—
Not earth—that's past—but heaven or me.
If this thou dost accord, albeit
A heavy doom 'tis thine to meet,
That doom shall half absolve thy sin,
And mercy's gate may receive thee within:
But pause one moment more, and take
The curse of Him thou didst forsake;
And look once more to heaven, and see
Its love for ever shut from thee.
There is a light cloud by the moon—*
'Tis passing, and will pass full soon—
If, by the time its vapory sail
Hath ceased her shaded orb to veil,
Thy heart within thee is not changed,
Then God and man are both avenged;
Dark will thy doom be, darker still
Thine immortality of ill."

Alp look'd to heaven, and saw on high
The sign she spake of in the sky;
But his heart was swoll'n, and turn'd aside,
By deep interminable pride.
This first false passion of his breast
Roll'd like a torrent o'er the rest.
He sue for mercy! *He* dismay'd
By wild words of a timid maid!
He, wrong'd by Venice, vow to save
Her sons, devoted to the grave!
No—though that cloud were thunder's worst,
And charged to crush him—let it burst!

He look'd upon it earnestly,
Without an accent of reply;
He watch'd it passing: it is flown:
Full on his eye the clear moon shone,
And thus he spake—"Whate'er my fate,
I am no changeling—'tis too late:
The reed in storms may bow and quiver,
Then rise again; the tree must shiver.
What Venice made me, I must be,
Her foe in all, save love to thee:
But thou art safe: oh, fly with me!"

* I have been told that the idea expressed in this and the five following lines has been admired by those whose approbation is valuable. I am glad of it: but it is not original—at least not mine: it may be found much better expressed in pages 182-184 of the English version of "Vathek" (I forget the precise page of the French), a work to which I have before referred; and never recur to, or read, without a renewal of gratification.

He turn'd, but she is gone!
Nothing is there but the column stone.
Hath she sunk in the earth, or melted in air?
He saw not—he knew not—but nothing is there.

XXII.

The night is past, and shines the sun
As if that morn were a jocund one.
Lightly and brightly breaks away
The Morning from her mantle gray,
And the Noon will look on a sultry day.
Hark to the trump, and the drum,
And the mournful sound of the barbarous horn,
And the flap of the banners, that flit as they're borne,
And the neigh of the steed, and the multitude's hum,
And the clash and the shout, "They come, they come!"
The horsetails are pluck'd from the ground, and the sword
From its sheath; and they form, and but wait for the word.
Tartar, and Spahi, and Turcoman,
Strike your tents, and throng to the van;
Mount ye, spur ye, skirr the plain,
That the fugitive may flee in vain,
When he breaks from the town; and none escape,
Aged or young in the Christian shape;
While your fellows on foot, in a fiery mass,
Bloodstain the breach through which they pass.
The steeds are all bridled, and snort to the rein;
Curved is each neck, and flowing each mane;
White is the foam of their champ on the bit:
The spears are uplifted; the matches are lit;
The cannon are pointed, and ready to roar,
And crush the wall they have crumbled before:
Forms in his phalanx each Janizar;
Alp at their head; his right arm is bare,
So is the blade of his scimitar;
The khan and the pachas are all at their post:
The vizier himself at the head of the host.
When the culverin's signal is fired, then on;
Leave not in Corinth a living one—
A priest at her altars, a chief in her halls,
A hearth in her mansions, a stone on her walls.
God and the prophet—Allah Hu!
Up to the skies with that wild halloo!

"There the breach lies for passage, the ladder to scale;
And your hands on your sabres, and how should ye fail?
He who first downs with the red cross may crave
His heart's dearest wish; let him ask it, and have!"
Thus utter'd Coumourgi, the dauntless vizier;
The reply was the brandish of sabre and spear,
And the shout of fierce thousands in joyous ire:—
Silence—hark to the signal—fire!

XXIII.

As the wolves, that headlong go
On the stately buffalo,

Though with fiery eyes, and angry roar,
And hoofs that stamp, and horns that gore,
He tramples on earth, or tosses on high
The foremost, who rush on his strength but to die;
Thus against the wall they went,
Thus the first were backward bent;
Many a bosom, sheathed in brass,
Strew'd the earth like broken glass,
Shiver'd by the shot, that tore
The ground whereon they moved no more:
Even as they fell, in files they lay,
Like the mower's grass at the close of day,
When his work is done on the levell'd plain;
Such was the fall of the foremost slain.

XXIV.

As the spring-tides, with heavy splash,
From the cliffs invading dash
Huge fragments, sapp'd by the ceaseless flow,
Till white and thundering down they go,
Like the avalanche's snow
On the Alpine vales below;
Thus at length, outbreathed and worn,
Corinth's sons were downward borne
By the long and oft-renew'd
Charge of the Moslem multitude.
In firmness they stood, and in masses they fell,
Heap'd, by the host of the infidel,
Hand to hand, and foot to foot:
Nothing there, save death, was mute;
Stroke, and thrust, and flash, and cry
For quarter, or for victory,
Mingle there with the volleying thunder,
Which makes the distant cities wonder
How the sounding battle goes,
If with them, or for their foes;
If they must mourn, or may rejoice
In that annihilating voice,
Which pierces the deep hills through and through
With an echo dread and new:
You might have heard it, on that day,
O'er Salamis and Megara;
(We have heard the hearers say,)
Even unto Piræus' bay.

XXV.

From the point of encountering blades to the hilt,
Sabres and swords with blood were gilt;
But the rampart is won, and the spoil begun,
And all but the after carnage done.
Shriller shrieks now mingling come
From within the plunder'd dome:
Hark to the haste of flying feet,
That splash in the blood of the slippery street;
But here and there, where vantage-ground
Against the foe may still be found,

Desperate groups, of twelve or ten,
Make a pause, and turn again—
With banded backs against the wall,
Fiercely stand, or fighting fall.

There stood an old man—his hairs were white,
But his veteran arm was full of might:
So gallantly bore he the brunt of the fray,
The dead before him, on that day,
In a semicircle lay;
Still he combated unwounded,
Though retreating, unsurrounded.
Many a scar of former fight
Lurk'd beneath his corselet bright;
But of every wound his body bore,
Each and all had been ta'en before:
Though aged, he was so iron of limb,
Few of our youth could cope with him;
And the foes, whom he singly kept at bay,
Outnumber'd his thin hairs of silver gray.
From right to left his sabre swept:
Many an Othman mother wept
Sons that were unborn, when dipp'd
His weapon first in Moslem gore,
Ere his years could count a score.
Of all he might have been the sire
Who fell that day beneath his ire:
For, sonless left long years ago,
His wrath made many a childless foe;
And since the day, when in the strait*
His only boy had met his fate,
His parent's iron hand did doom
More than a human hecatomb.
If shades by carnage be appeased,
Patroclus' spirit less was pleased
Than his, Minotti's son, who died
Where Asia's bounds and ours divide;
Buried he lay, where thousands before
For thousands of years were inhumed on the shore,
What of them is left, to tell
Where they lie, and how they fell?
Not a stone on their turf, nor a bone in their graves;
But they live in the verse that immortally saves.

XXVI.

Hark to the Allah shout! a band
Of the Mussulman bravest and best is at hand:
Their leader's nervous arm is bare,
Swifter to smite, and never to spare—
Unclothed to the shoulder it waves them on;
Thus in the fight is he ever known:
Others a gaudier garb may show,
To tempt the spoil of the greedy foe;

* In the naval battle at the mouth of the Dardanelles, between the Venetians and the Turks.

Many a hand's on a richer hilt,
But none on a steel more ruddily gilt;
Many a loftier turban may wear,—
Alp is but known by the white arm bare;
Look through the thick of the fight, 'tis there!
There is not a standard on that shore
So well advanced the ranks before;
There is not a banner in Moslem war
Will lure the Delis half so far;
It glances like a falling star!
Where'er that mighty arm is seen,
The bravest be, or late have been;
There the craven cries for quarter
Vainly to the vengeful Tartar;
Or the hero, silent lying,
Scorns to yield a groan in dying;
Mustering his last feeble blow
'Gainst the nearest levell'd foe,
Though faint beneath the mutual wound,
Grappling on the gory ground.

XXVII.

Still the old man stood erect,
And Alp's career a moment check'd.
"Yield thee, Minotti; quarter take,
For thine own, thy daughter's sake."

"Never, renegado, never!
Though the life of thy gift would last for ever."

"Francesca!—oh, my promised bride:
Must she too perish by thy pride?"

"She is safe."—"Where? where?"—"In heaven;
From whence thy traitor soul is driven—
Far from thee, and undefiled."
Grimly then Minotti smiled,
As he saw Alp staggering bow
Before his words, as with a blow.

"O God! when died she?"—"Yesternight—
Nor weep I for her spirit's flight:
None of my pure race shall be
Slaves to Mohammed and thee—
Come on!"—That challenge is in vain—
Alp's already with the slain!
While Minotti's words were wreaking
More revenge in bitter speaking
Than his falchion's point had found,
Had the time allow'd to wound,
From within the neighboring porch
Of a long-defended church,
Where the last and desperate few
Would the failing fight renew,
The sharp shot dash'd Alp to the ground;
Ere an eye could view the wound

That crash'd through the brain of the infidel,
Round he spun, and down he fell;
A flash like fire within his eyes
Blazed, as he bent no more to rise,
And then eternal darkness sunk
Through all the palpitating trunk;
Nought of life left, save a quivering
Where his limbs were slightly shivering:
They turn'd him on his back; his breast
And brow were stain'd with gore and dust,
And through his lips the life-blood oozed,
From its deep veins lately loosed;
But in his pulse there was no throb,
Nor on his lips one dying sob;
Sigh, nor word, nor struggling breath
Heralded his way to death:
Ere his very thought could pray,
Unanel'd he pass'd away,
Without a hope from mercy's aid,—
To the last—a Renegade.

XXVIII.

Fearfully the yell arose
Of his followers and his foes;
These in joy, in fury those:
Then again in conflict mixing,
Clashing swords, and spears transfixing,
Interchanged the blow and thrust,
Hurling warriors in the dust.
Street by street, and foot by foot,
Still Minotti dares dispute
The latest portion of the land
Left beneath his high command;
With him aiding heart and hand,
The remnant of his gallant band.
Still the church is tenable,
Whence issued late the fated ball
That half avenged the city's fall,
When Alp, her fierce assailant, fell:
Thither bending sternly back,
They leave before a bloody track;
And, with their faces to the foe,
Dealing wounds with every blow,
The chief, and his retreating train,
Join to those within the fane;
There they yet may breathe awhile,
Shelter'd by the massy pile.

XXIX.

Brief breathing-time! the turban'd host,
With added ranks and raging boast,
Press onward with such strength and heat,
Their numbers balk their own retreat;
For narrow the way that led to the spot
Where still the Christians yielded not;

And the foremost, if fearful, may vainly try
Through the massy column to turn and fly;
They perforce must do or die.
They die: but ere their eyes could close,
Avengers o'er their bodies rose;
Fresh and furious, fast they fill
The ranks unthinn'd, though slaughter'd still:
And faint the weary Christians wax
Before the still renew'd attacks:
And now the Othmans gain the gate;
Still resists its iron weight,
And still, all deadly aim'd and hot,
From every crevice comes the shot;
From every shatter'd window pour
The volleys of the sulphurous shower:
But the portal wavering grows and weak—
The iron yields, the hinges creak—
It bends—and falls—and all is o'er;
Lost Corinth may resist no more!

XXX.

Dark, sternly, and all alone,
Minotti stood o'er the altar-stone:
Madonna's face upon him shone,
Painted in heavenly hues above,
With eyes of light and looks of love;
And placed upon that holy shrine
To fix our thoughts on things divine,
When pictured there we kneeling see
Her, and the boy-God on her knee,
Smiling sweetly on each prayer
To heaven, as if to waft it there.
Still she smiled; even now she smiles,
Though slaughter streams along her aisles.
Minotti lifted his aged eye,
And made the sign of a cross with a sigh,
Then seized a torch which blazed thereby;
And still he stood, while, with steel and flame,
Inward and onward the Mussulman came.

XXXI.

The vaults beneath the mosaic stone
Contain'd the dead of ages gone;
Their names were on the graven floor,
But now illegible with gore;
The carved crests, and curious hues
The varied marble's veins diffuse,
Were smear'd, and slippery—stain'd, and strown
With broken swords, and helms o'erthrown:
There were dead above, and the dead below
Lay cold in many a coffin'd row;
You might see them piled in sable state,
By a pale light through a gloomy grate:
But War had enter'd their dark caves,
And stored along the vaulted graves

Her sulphurous treasures, thickly spread
In masses by the fleshless dead:
Here, throughout the siege, had been
The Christians' chiefest magazine;
To these a late-form'd train now led,
Minotti's last and stern resource,
Against the foe's o'erwhelming force.

XXXII.

The foe came on, and few remain
To strive, and those must strive in vain:
For lack of further lives, to slake
The thirst of vengeance now awake,
With barbarous blows they gash the dead,
And lop the already lifeless head,
And fell the statues from their niche,
And spoil the shrines of offerings rich,
And from each other's rude hands wrest
The silver vessels saints had bless'd.
To the high altar on they go;
Oh, but it made a glorious show!
On its table still behold
The cup of consecrated gold;
Massy and deep, a glittering prize,
Brightly it sparkles to plunderers' eyes:
That morn it held the holy wine,
Converted by Christ to His blood so divine,
Which His worshippers drank at the break of day
To shrive their souls ere they join'd in the fray,
Still a few drops within it lay;
And round the sacred table glow
Twelve lofty lamps, in splendid row,
From the purest metal cast;
A spoil—the richest, and the last.

XXXIII.

So near they came, the nearest stretch'd
To grasp the spoil he almost reach'd,
When old Minotti's hand
Touch'd with a torch the train—
'Tis fired!
Spire, vaults, and shrine, the spoil, the slain,
The turban'd victors, the Christian band,
All that of living or dead remain,
Hurl'd on high with the shiver'd fane,
In one wild roar expired!
The shatter'd town—the walls thrown down—
The waves a moment backward bent—
The hills that shake, although unrent,
As if an earthquake pass'd—
The thousand shapeless things all driven
In cloud and flame athwart the heaven,
By that tremendous blast—
Proclaim'd the desperate conflict o'er
On that too long afflicted shore!

Up to the sky like rockets go
All that mingled there below:
Many a tall and goodly man,
Scorch'd and shrivell'd to a span,
When he fell to earth again
Like a cinder strew'd the plain:
Down the ashes shower like rain;
Some fell in the gulf, which received the sprinkles
With a thousand circling wrinkles;
Some fell on the shore, but, far away,
Scatter'd o'er the isthmus lay;
Christian or Moslem, which be they?
Let their mothers see and say!
When in cradled rest they lay,
And each nursing mother smiled
On the sweet sleep of her child,
Little deem'd she such a day
Would rend those tender limbs away.
Not the matrons that them bore
Could discern their offspring more:
That one moment left no trace
More of human form or face
Save a scatter'd scalp or bone:
And down came blazing rafters, strown
Around, and many a falling stone,
Deeply dinted in the clay,
All blacken'd there and reeking lay.
All the living things that heard
That deadly earth-shock disappear'd:
The wild birds flew; the wild dogs fled,
And howling left the unburied dead;
The camels from their keepers broke;
The distant steer forsook the yoke—
The nearer steed plunged o'er the plain,
And burst his girth, and tore his rein;
The bull-frog's note, from out the marsh,
Deep-mouth'd arose, and doubly harsh;
The wolves yell'd on the cavern'd hill
Where echo roll'd in thunder still;
The jackal's troop, in gather'd cry,*
Bay'd from afar complainingly,
With a mix'd and mournful sound,
Like crying babe, and beaten hound;
With sudden wing, and ruffled breast,
The eagle left his rocky nest,
And mounted nearer to the sun,
The clouds beneath him seem'd so dun
Their smoke assail'd his startled beak,
And made him higher soar and shriek—
Thus was Corinth lost and won!

* I believe I have taken a poetical license to transplant the jackal from Asia. In Greece I never saw nor heard these animals; but among the ruins of Ephesus I have heard them by hundreds. They haunt ruins, and follow armies.

PARISINA.

TO

SCROPE BERDMORE DAVIES, ESQ.,

THE FOLLOWING POEM IS INSCRIBED,

BY ONE WHO HAS LONG ADMIRED HIS TALENTS AND VALUED

HIS FRIENDSHIP.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following poem is grounded on a circumstance mentioned in Gibbon's "Antiquities of the House of Brunswick." I am aware that in modern times the delicacy or fastidiousness of the reader may deem such subjects unfit for the purposes of poetry. The Greek dramatists, and some of the best of our old English writers, were of a different opinion: as Alfieri and Schiller have also been, more recently, upon the Continent. The following extract will explain the facts on which the story is founded. The name of *Azo* is substituted for Nicholas, as more metrical: —

"Under the reign of Nicholas III., Ferrar was polluted with a domestic tragedy. By the testimony of an attendant, and his own observation, the Marquis of Este discovered the incestuous loves of his wife Parisina, and Hugo his bastard son, a beautiful and valiant youth. They were beheaded in the castle by the sentence of a father and husband, who published his shame, and survived their execution. He was unfortunate, if they were guilty; if they were innocent, he was still more unfortunate; nor is there any possible situation in which I can sincerely approve the last act of the justice of a parent." — *Gibbon's Miscellaneous Works*, vol. iii. p. 470.

PARISINA.*

I.

It is the hour when from the boughs
The nightingale's high note is heard;
It is the hour when lovers' vows
Seem sweet in every whisper'd word;
And gentle winds, and waters near,
Make music to the lonely ear.
Each flower the dews have lightly wet,
And in the sky the stars are met,

* The facts on which the present poem was grounded are thus given in Frizzi's History of Ferrara:

"This turned out a calamitous year for the people of Ferrara; for there occurred a very tragical event in the court of their sovereign. Our annals, both printed and in manuscript, with the exception of the unpolished and negligent work of Sardi, and one other, have given the following relation of it,—from which, however, are rejected many details, and especially the narrative of Bandelli, who wrote a century afterwards, and who does not accord with the contemporary historians.

"By the above-mentioned Stella dell' Assassino, the Marquis, in the year 1405, had a son called Ugo, a beautiful and ingenuous youth. Parisina Malatesta, second wife of Niccolo, like the generality of step-mothers, treated him with little kindness, to the infinite regret of the Marquis, who regarded him with fond partiality. One day she asked leave of her husband to undertake a certain journey, to which he consented, but upon condition that Ugo should bear her company; for he hoped by these means to induce her, in the end, to lay aside the obstinate aversion which she had conceived against him. And indeed his intent was accomplished but too well, since, during the journey, she not only divested herself of all her hatred, but fell into the opposite extreme. After their return, the Marquis had no longer any occasion to renew his former reproofs. It happened one day that a servant of the Marquis, named Zoese, or, as some call him, Giorgio, passing before the apartments of Parisina, saw going out from them one of her chambermaids, all terrified and in tears. Asking the reason, she told him that her mistress, for some slight offence, had been beating her: and giving vent to her rage, she added, that she could easily be revenged, if she chose to make known the criminal familiarity which subsisted between Parisina and her stepson. The servant took note of the words, and related them to his master. He was astounded thereat, but scarcely believing his ears, he assured himself of the fact—alas! too clearly—on the 18th of May, by looking through a hole made in the ceiling of his wife's chamber. Instantly he broke into a furious rage, and arrested both of them, together with Aldobrandino Rangoni, of Modena, her gentleman, and also, as some say, two of the women of her chamber, as abettors of this sinful act. He ordered them to be brought to a hasty trial, desiring the judges to pronounce sentence, in the accustomed forms, upon the culprits. This sentence was death. Some there were that bestirred themselves in favor of the delinquents, and amongst others, Ugoccion Contrario, who was all-powerful with Niccolo, and also his aged and much deserving minister, Alberto dal Sale. Both of these, their tears flowing down their cheeks, and upon their knees, implored him for mercy; adducing whatever reasons they could suggest for sparing the offenders, besides those motives of honor and decency which might persuade

And on the wave is deeper blue,
And on the leaf a browner hue,
And in the heaven that clear obscure,
So softly dark, and darkly pure,
Which follows the decline of day,
As twilight melts beneath the moon away.

II.

But it is not to list to the waterfall
That Parisina leaves her hall,
And it is not to gaze on the heavenly light
That the lady walks in the shadow of night;
And if she sits in Este's bower,
'Tis not for the sake of its full-blown flower—
She listens—but not for the nightingale—
Though her ear expects as soft a tale.
There glides a step through the foliage thick,
And her cheek grows pale—and her heart beats quick;
There whispers a voice through the rustling leaves,
And her blush returns, and her bosom heaves!
A moment more—and they shall meet—
'Tis past—her lover's at her feet.

him to conceal from the public so scandalous a deed. But his rage made him inflexible, and, on the instant, he commanded that the sentence should be put in execution.

"It was, then, in the prisons of the castle, and exactly in those frightful dungeons which are seen at this day beneath the chamber called the Aurora, at the foot of the Lion's tower, at the top of the street Giovecca, that on the night of the 21st of May were beheaded, first, Ugo, and afterwards Parisina. Zoese, he that accused her, conducted the latter under his arm to the place of punishment. She, all along, fancied that she was to be thrown into a pit, and asked at every step, whether she was yet come to the spot? She was told that her punishment was the axe. She inquired what had become of Ugo, and received for answer that he was already dead; at the which, sighing grievously, she exclaimed, 'Now, then, I wish not myself to live;' and being come to the block, she stripped herself with her own hands of all her ornaments, and wrapping a cloth round her head, submitted to the fatal stroke, which terminated the cruel scene. The same was done with Rangoni, who, together with the others, accordin to two calendars in the library of St. Francesco, was buried in the cemetery of that convent. Nothing else is known respecting the women.

"The Marquis kept watch the whole of that dreadful night, and, as he was walking backwards and forwards, inquired of the captain of the castle if Ugo was dead yet? who answered him yes. He then gave himself up to the most desperate lamentations, exclaiming, 'Oh, that I too was dead, since I have been hurried on to resolve thus against my own Ugo!' And then gnawing with his teeth a cane which he had in his hand, he passed the rest of the night in sighs and in tears, calling frequently upon his own dear Ugo. On the following day, calling to mind that it would be necessary to make public his justification, seeing that the transaction could not be kept secret, he ordered the narrativo to be drawn out upon paper, and sent it to all the courts of Italy.

"On receiving this advice, the Doge of Venice, Francesco Foscari, gave orders, but without publishing his reasons, that stop should be put to the preparations for a tournament, which, under the auspices of the Marquis, and at the expense of the city of Padua, was about to take place, in the square of St. Mark, in order to celebrate his advancement to the ducal chair.

"The Marquis, in addition to what he had already done, from some unaccountable burst of vengeance, commanded that as many of the married women as were well known to him to be faithless, like his Parisina, should, like her, be beheaded. Amongst others, Barberina, or, as some call her, Laodamia Romei, wife of the court judge, underwent this sentence, at the usual place of execution; that is to say, in the quarter of St. Giacoma, opposite the present fortress, beyond St. Paul's. It cannot be told how strange appeared this proceeding in a prince, who, considering his own disposition, should, as it seemed, have been in such cases most indulgent. Some, however, there were who did not fail to commend him."

III.

And what unto them is the world beside,
With all its change of time and tide?
Its living things—its earth and sky—
Are nothing to their mind and eye.
And heedless as the dead are they
Of aught around, above, beneath;
As if all else had pass'd away,
They only for each other breathe;
Their very sighs are full of joy
So deep, that did it not decay,
That happy madness would destroy
The hearts which feel its fiery sway:
Of guilt, of peril, do they deem
In that tumultuous tender dream?
Who that have felt that passion's power,
Or paused, or fear'd, in such an hour?
Or thought how brief such moments last?
But yet—they are already past!
Alas! we must awake before
We know such vision comes no more.

IV.

With many a lingering look they leave
The spot of guilty gladness past;
And though they hope, and vow, they grieve,
As if that parting were the last,
The frequent sigh—the long embrace—
The lip that there would cling forever,
While gleams on Parisina's face
The Heaven she fears will not forgive her,
As if each calmly conscious star
Beheld her frailty from afar—
The frequent sigh, the long embrace,
Yet binds them to their trysting-place,
But it must come, and they must part
In fearful heaviness of heart,
With all the deep and shuddering chill
Which follows fast the deeds of ill.

V.

And Hugo is gone to his lonely bed,
To covet there another's bride;
But she must lay her conscious head
A husband's trusting heart beside.
But fever'd in her sleep she seems,
And red her cheek with troubled dreams,
And mutters she in her unrest
A name she dare not breathe by day,
And clasps her lord unto the breast
Which pants for one away:
And he to that embrace awakes,
And, happy in the thought, mistakes
That dreaming sigh, and warm caress,
For such as he was wont to bless;

And could in very fondness weep
O'er her who loves him even in sleep.

VI.

He clasp'd her sleeping to his heart,
And listen'd to each broken word:
He hears—Why doth Prince Azo start,
As if the Archangel's voice he heard?
And well he may—a deeper doom
Could scarcely thunder o'er his tomb,
When he shall wake to sleep no more,
And stand the eternal throne before.
And well he may—his earthly peace
Upon that sound is doom'd to cease.
That sleeping whisper of a name
Bespeaks her guilt and Azo's shame.
And whose that name? that o'er his pillow
Sounds fearful as the breaking billow,
Which rolls the plank upon the shore,
And dashes on the pointed rock
The wretch who sinks to rise no more—
So came upon his soul the shock.
And whose that name?—'tis Hugo's—his—
In sooth he had not deem'd of this!—
'Tis Hugo's—he, the child of one
He loved—his own all-evil son—
The offspring of his wayward youth,
When he betray'd Bianca's truth,
The maid whose folly could confide
In him who made her not his bride.

VII.

He pluck'd his poniard in its sheath,
But sheathed it ere the point was bare—
However unworthy now to breathe,
He could not slay a thing so fair—
At least, not smiling—sleeping—there—
Nay more:—he did not wake her then,
But gazed upon her with a glance,
Which, had she roused her from her trance,
Had frozen her sense to sleep again—
And o'er his brow the burning lamp
Gleam'd on the dewdrops big and damp,
She spake no more—but still she slumber'd—
While, in his thought, her days are number'd.

VIII.

And with the morn he sought, and found,
In many a tale from those around,
The proof of all he fear'd to know,
Their present guilt, his future woe;
The long-conniving damsels seek
To save themselves, and would transfer
The guilt—the shame—the doom—to her:
Concealment is no more—they speak

All circumstance which may compel
Full credence to the tale they tell:
And Azo's tortured heart and ear
Have nothing more to feel or fear.

IX.

He was not one who brook'd delay:
Within the chamber of his state,
The chief of Este's ancient sway
Upon his throne of judgment sate;
His nobles and his guards are there,—
Before him is the sinful pair;
Both young—and *one* how passing fair!
With swordless belt, and fetter'd hand,
O Christ! that thus a son should stand
Before a father's face!
Yet thus must Hugo meet his sire,
And hear the sentence of his ire,
The tale of his disgrace!
And yet he seems not overcome,
Although, as yet, his voice be dumb.

X.

And still, and pale, and silently
Did Parisina wait her doom;
How changed since last her speaking eye
Glanced gladness round the glittering room,
Where high-born men were proud to wait—
Where beauty watch'd to imitate
Her gentle voice—her lovely mien—
And gather from her air and gait
The graces of its queen:
Then—had her eye in sorrow wept,
A thousand warriors forth had leapt,
A thousand swords had sheathless shone,
And made her quarrel all their own.
Now—what is she? and what are they?
Can she command, or these obey?
All silent and unheeding now,
With downcast eyes and knitting brow,
And folded arms, and freezing air,
And lips that scarce their scorn forbear,
Her knights and dames, her court—is there,
And he, the chosen one, whose lance
Had yet been couch'd before her glance,
Who—were his arm a moment free—
Had died or gain'd her liberty;
The minion of his father's bride—
He, too, is fetter'd by her side:
Nor sees her swoln and full eye swim
Less for her own despair than him:
Those lids—o'er which the violet vein
Wandering, leaves a tender stain,
Shining through the smoothest white
That e'er did softest kiss invite—

Now seem'd with hot and livid glow
To press, not shade, the orbs below;
Which glance so heavily, and fill,
As tear on tear grows gathering still.

XI.

And he for her had also wept,
  But for the eyes that on him gazed:
His sorrow, if he felt it, slept;
  Stern and erect his brow was raised.
Whate'er the grief his soul avow'd,
He would not shrink before the crowd;
But yet he dared not look on her:
Remembrance of the hours that were—
His guilt—his love—his present state—
His father's wrath—all good men's hate—
His earthly, his eternal fate—
And hers—oh, hers! he dared not throw
One look upon that deathlike brow!
Else had his rising heart betray'd
Remorse for all the wreck it made.

XII.

And Azo spake:—"But yesterday
  I gloried in a wife and son;
That dream this morning pass'd away:
  Ere day declines, I shall have none.
My life must linger on alone;
Well—let that pass—there breathes not one
Who would not do as I have done:
Those ties are broken—not by me;
  Let that too pass;—the doom's prepared!
Hugo, the priest awaits on thee,
  And then—thy crime's reward!
Away! address thy prayers to Heaven,
  Before its evening stars are met—
Learn if thou there canst be forgiven;
  Its mercy may absolve thee yet.
But here, upon the earth beneath,
  There is no spot where thou and I
Together, for an hour, could breathe:
  Farewell! I will not see thee die—
But thou, frail thing! shalt view his head—
  Away! I cannot speak the rest:
  Go! woman of the wanton breast;
Not I, but thou, his blood dost shed:
Go! if that sight thou canst outlive,
And joy thee in the life I give."

XIII.

And here stern Azo hid his face—
  For on his brow the swelling vein
  Throbb'd as if back upon his brain
  The hot blood ebb'd and flow'd again;
And therefore bow'd he for a space,
And pass'd his shaking hand along
His eye, to veil it from the throng;

While Hugo raised his chained hands,
And for a brief delay demands
His father's ear: the silent sire
Forbids not what his words require.

"It is not that I dread the death—
For thou hast seen me by thy side
All redly through the battle ride,
And that not once a useless brand
Thy slaves have wrested from my hand,
Hath shed more blood in cause of thine
Than e'er can stain the axe of mine;
Thou gav'st, and may'st resume my breath,
A gift for which I thank thee not;
Nor are my mother's wrongs forgot,
Her slighted love and ruin'd name,
Her offspring's heritage of shame;
But she is in the grave, where he,
Her son, thy rival, soon shall be.
Her broken heart—my sever'd head—
Shall witness for thee from the dead
How trusty and how tender were
Thy youthful love—paternal care.
'Tis true that I have done thee wrong—
But wrong for wrong:—this deem'd thy bride,
The other victim of thy pride,
Thou know'st for me was destined long.
Thou saw'st, and covetedst her charms—
And with thy very crime—my birth,
Thou tauntedst me—as little worth!
A match ignoble for her arms,
Because, forsooth, I could not claim
The lawful heirship of thy name,
Nor sit on Este's lineal throne:
Yet were a few short summers mine,
My name should more than Este's shine
With honors all my own.
I had a sword—and have a breast
That should have won as haught a crest *
As ever waved along the line
Of all these sovereign sires of thine.
Not always knightly spurs are worn
The brightest by the better born;
And mine have lanced my courser's flank
Before proud chiefs of princely rank,
When charging to the cheering cry
Of 'Este and of Victory!'
I will not plead the cause of crime,
Nor sue thee to redeem from time
A few brief hours or days that must
At length roll o'er my reckless dust;—
Such maddening moments as my past,
They could not, and they did not, last.

* "Haught," haughty—"Away, *haught* man, thou art insulting me."—SHAKSPEARE.

Albeit my birth and name be base,
And thy nobility of race
Disdain'd to deck a thing like me—
  Yet in my lineaments they trace
  Some features of my father's face,
And in my spirit—all of thee.
From thee—this tamelessness of heart—
From thee—nay, wherefore dost thou start?—
From thee in all their vigor came
My arm of strength, my soul of flame—
Thou didst not give me life alone,
But all that made me more thine own.
See what thy guilty love hath done!
Repaid thee with too like a son!
I am no bastard in my soul,
For that, like thine, abhorr'd control:
And for my breath, that hasty boon
Thou gav'st and wilt resume so soon,
I value it no more than thou,
When rose thy casque above thy brow,
And we, all side by side, have striven,
And o'er the dead our coursers driven:
The past is nothing—and at last
The future can but be the past;
Yet would I that I then had died;
  For though thou work'dst my mother's ill,
And made thy own my destined bride,
  I feel thou art my father still;
And, harsh as sounds thy hard decree,
'Tis not unjust, although from thee.
Begot in sin, to die in shame,
My life begun and ends the same:
As err'd the sire, so err'd the son,
And thou must punish both in one.
My crime seems worst to human view,
But God must judge between us too!"

XIV.

He ceased—and stood with folded arms,
  On which the circling fetters sounded;
  And not an ear but felt as wounded,
  Of all the chiefs that there were rank'd,
  When those dull chains in meeting clank'd:
Till Parisina's fatal charms
Again attracted every eye—
Would she thus hear him doom'd to die!
She stood, I said, all pale and still,
The living cause of Hugo's ill!
Her eyes unmoved, but full and wide,
Not once had turn'd to either side—
Nor once did those sweet eyelids close,
Or shade the glance o'er which they rose,
But round their orbs of deepest blue
The circling white dilated grew—
And there with glassy gaze she stood
As ice were in her curdled blood;

But every now and then a tear
  So large and slowly gather'd slid
  From the long dark fringe of that fair lid,
It was a thing to see, not hear!
And those who saw, it did surprise,
Such drops could fall from human eyes.
To speak she thought—the imperfect note
Was choked within her swelling throat,
Yet seem'd in that low, hollow groan
Her whole heart gushing in the tone.
It ceased—again she thought to speak,
Then burst her voice in one long shriek,
And to the earth she fell like stone
Or statue from its base o'erthrown,
More like a thing that ne'er had life—
A monument of Azo's wife—
Than her, that living, guilty thing,
Whose every passion was a sting,
Which urged to guilt, but could not bear
That guilt's detection and despair.
But yet she lived—and all too soon
Recover'd from that death-like swoon—
But scarce to reason—every sense
Had been o'erstrung by pangs intense;
And each frail fibre of her brain
(As bowstrings, when relax'd by rain,
The erring arrow launch aside)
Sent forth her thoughts all wild and wide—
The past a blank, the future black,
With glimpses of a dreary track,
Like lightning on the desert path,
When midnight storms are mustering wrath.
She fear'd—she felt that something ill
Lay on her soul, so deep and chill—
That there was sin and shame she knew;
That some one was to die—but who?
She had forgotten:—did she breathe?
Could this be still the earth beneath
The sky above, and men around;
Or were they fiends who now so frown'd
On one, before whose eyes each eye
Till then had smiled in sympathy?
All was confused and undefined
To her all-jarr'd and wandering mind;
A chaos of wild hopes and fears:
And now in laughter, now in tears,
But madly still in each extreme,
She strove with that convulsive dream;
For so it seem'd on her to break:
Oh! vainly must she strive to wake!

XV.

The Convent bells are ringing,
  But mournfully and slow:
In the gray square turret swinging,
  With a deep sound, to and fro.

Heavily to the heart they go!
Hark! the hymn is singing—
The song for the dead below,
Or the living who shortly shall be so!
For a departing being's soul
The death-hymn peals and the hollow bells knoll:
He is near his mortal goal;
Kneeling at the friar's knee;
Sad to hear—and piteous to see—
Kneeling on the bare cold ground,
With the block before and the guards around—
And the headsman with his bare arm ready,
That the blow may be both swift and steady,
Feels if the axe be sharp and true—
Since he set its edge anew:
While the crowd in a speechless circle gather
To see the Son fall by the doom of the Father.

XVI.

It is a lovely hour as yet
Before the summer sun shall set,
Which rose upon that heavy day,
And mock'd it with his steadiest ray;
And his evening beams are shed
Full on Hugo's fated head,
As his last confession pouring
To the monk, his doom deploring
In penitential holiness,
He bends to hear his accents bless
With absolution such as may
Wipe our mortal stains away.
That high sun on his head did glisten
As he there did bow and listen—
And the rings of chestnut hair
Curl'd half down his neck so bare;
But brighter still the beam was thrown
Upon the axe which near him shone
With a clear and ghastly glitter.—
Oh! that parting hour was bitter!
Even the stern stood chill'd with awe:
Dark the crime, and just the law—
Yet they shudder'd as they saw.

XVII.

The parting prayers are said and over
Of that false son—and daring lover!
His beads and sins are all recounted,
His hours to their last minute mounted—
His mantling cloak before was stripp'd,
His bright brown locks must now be clipp'd:
'Tis done—all closely are they shorn—
The vest which till this moment worn—
The scarf which Parisina gave—
Must not adorn him to the grave.
Even that must now be thrown aside,
And o'er his eyes the kerchief tied;

But no—that last indignity
Shall ne'er approach his haughty eye.
All feelings seemingly subdued,
In deep disdain were half renew'd,
When headsman's hands prepared to bind
Those eyes which would not brook such blind:
As if they dared not look on death.
"No—yours my forfeit blood and breath—
These hands are chain'd—but let me die
At least with an unshackled eye—
Strike:"—and as the word he said,
Upon the block he bow'd his head;
These the last accents Hugo spoke:
"Strike:"—and flashing fell the stroke—
Roll'd the head—and, gushing, sunk
Back the stain'd and heaving trunk,
In the dust, which each deep vein
Slaked with its ensanguined rain;
His eyes and lips a moment quiver,
Convulsed and quick—then fix for ever.
He died, as erring man should die,
Without display, without parade;
Meekly had he bow'd and pray'd,
As not disdaining priestly aid,
Nor desperate of all hope on high.
And while before the prior kneeling,
His heart was wean'd from earthly feeling;
His wrathful sire—his paramour—
What were they in such an hour?
No more reproach—no more despair;
No thought but heaven—no word but prayer—
Save the few which from him broke,
When, bared to meet the headsman's stroke,
He claim'd to die with eyes unbound,
His sole adieu to those around.

XVIII.

Still as the lips that closed in death,
Each gazer's bosom held his breath:
But yet, afar, from man to man,
A cold electric shiver ran,
As down the deadly blow descended
On him whose life and love thus ended;
And, with a hushing sound compress'd,
A sigh shrunk back on every breast;
But no more thrilling noise rose there,
Beyond the blow that to the block
Pierced through with forced and sullen shock,
Save one:—What cleaves the silent air
So madly shrill—so passing wild?
That, as a mother's o'er her child,
Done to death by sudden blow,
To the sky these accents go,
Like a soul's in endless woe.
Through Azo's palace-lattice driven,
That horrid voice ascends to heaven,

And every eye is turn'd thereon;
But sound and sight alike are gone!
It was a woman's shriek—and ne'er
In madlier accents rose despair;
And those who heard it, as it pass'd,
In mercy wish'd it were the last.

XIX.

Hugo is fallen; and from that hour,
No more in palace, hall, or bower,
Was Parisina heard or seen:
Her name—as if she ne'er had been—
Was banish'd from each lip and ear,
Like words of wantonness or fear;
And from Prince Azo's voice, by none
Was mention heard of wife or son;
No tomb—no memory had they;
Theirs was unconsecrated clay;
At least the knight's who died that day
But Parisina's fate lies hid
Like dust beneath the coffin-lid:
Whether in convent she abode,
And won to heaven her dreary road,
By blighted and remorseful years
Of scourge, and fast, and sleepless tears;
Or if she fell by bowl or steel,
For that dark love she dared to feel;
Or if upon the moment smote,
She died by tortures less remote;
Like him she saw upon the block,
With heart that shared the headsman's shock
In quicken'd brokenness that came,
In pity, o'er her shatter'd frame,
None knew—and none can ever know:
But whatsoe'er its end below,
Her life began and closed in woe!

XX.

And Azo found another bride,
And goodly sons grew by his side;
But none so lovely and so brave
As him who wither'd in the grave;
Or if they were—on his cold eye
Their growth but glanced unheeded by,
Or noticed with a smother'd sigh.
But never tear his cheek descended,
And never smile his brow unbended;
And o'er that fair broad brow were wrought
The intersected lines of thought;
Those furrows which the burning share
Of Sorrow ploughs untimely there;
Scars of the lacerating mind
Which the Soul's war doth leave behind.
He was past all mirth or woe:
Nothing more remain'd below
But sleepless nights and heavy days,

A mind all dead to scorn or praise,
A heart which shunn'd itself—and yet
That would not yield—nor could forget,
Which, when it least appear'd to melt,
Intently thought—intensely felt:
The deepest ice which ever froze
Can only o'er the surface close—
The living stream lies quick below,
And flows—and cannot cease to flow.
Still was his seal'd-up bosom haunted
By thoughts which Nature had implanted;
Too deeply rooted thence to vanish,
Howe'er our stifled fears we banish;
When, struggling as they rise to start,
We check those waters of the heart,
They are not dried—those tears unshed,
But flow back to the fountain-head,
And resting in their spring more pure,
For ever in its depth endure,
Unseen, unwept, but uncongeal'd,
And cherish'd most where least reveal'd.
With inward starts of feeling left,
To throb o'er those of life bereft;
Without the power to fill again
The desert gap which made his pain;
Without the hope to meet them where
United souls shall gladness share,
With all the consciousness that he
Had only pass'd a just decree;
That they had wrought their doom of ill;
Yet Azo's age was wretched still.
The tainted branches of the tree,
If lopp'd with care, a strength may give,
By which the rest shall bloom and live
All greenly fresh and wildly free:
But if the lightning, in its wrath,
The waving boughs with fury scath,
The massy trunk the ruin feels,
And never more a leaf reveals.

THE PRISONER OF CHILLON.

ADVERTISEMENT.

When this poem was composed, I was not sufficiently aware of the history of Bonnivard, or I should have endeavored to dignify the subject by an attempt to celebrate his courage and his virtues. Some account of his life will be found below, furnished me by the kindness of a citizen of that republic, which is still proud of the memory of a man worthy of the best age of ancient freedom:—

Francois de Bonnivard, son of Louis de Bonnivard, a native of Seysel, and Seigneur of Lunes, was born in 1496; he was educated at Turin. In 1510, his uncle, Jean-Reiné de Bonnivard, resigned to him the Priory of Saint-Victor, which adjoins the walls of Geneva, and which was a considerable living.

This great man,—Bonnivard is deserving of this title for his greatness of soul, the uprightness of his heart, the nobility of his intentions, the wisdom of his counsels, the courage of his actions, the extent of his learning, and the brilliancy of his wit,—this great man, who will ever excite the admiration of all those whom an heroic virtue can move, will always inspire the most lively gratitude in the hearts of those Genevese who love Geneva. Bonnivard was always one of its firmest supports; to protect the liberty of our republic, he never feared to lose his own; he forgot his ease, he despised his wealth; he neglected nothing to render certain the happiness of the country that he dignified by his adoption; from that moment he loved it as the most zealous of its citizens, he served it with the intrepidity of a hero, and he wrote its history with the simplicity of a philosopher, and the ardor of a patriot.

He says in the commencement of his "History of Geneva," that, "as soon as he commenced to read the histories of nations, he felt himself carried away by his love for republics, the interest of which he always advocated." It was, doubtless, this very love of liberty that made him adopt Geneva as his country.

Bonnivard, while yet young, boldly stood forward as the defender of Geneva, against the Duke of Savoy and the Bishop.

In 1519, Bonnivard became the martyr of his country: the Duke of Savoy having entered Geneva with five hundred men, Bonnivard feared the resentment of the Duke; he wished to return to Fribourg to avoid the consequences; but he was betrayed by two men who accompanied him, and conducted by order of the prince to Grolee, where for two years he remained a prisoner.

Bonnivard was unfortunate in his travels. As his misfortunes had not slackened his zeal for Geneva, he was always a redoubtable enemy to those who threatened it, and accordingly he was likely to be exposed to their violence. He was met in 1530 on the Jura, by thieves, who stripped him of everything, and placed him again in the hands of the Duke of Savoy. This prince caused him to be confined in the Chateau of Chillon, where he remained without being sub-

mitted to any interrogatory until 1536; he was then delivered by the Bernois, who took possession of the Pays de Vaud.

Bonnivard, on leaving his captivity, had the pleasure of finding Geneva free and reformed. The Republic hastened to testify its gratitude to him, and to recompense him for the evils which he had suffered. It received him as a citizen of the town, in the month of June, 1536; it gave him the house formerly inhabited by the Vicar-General, and assigned to him a pension of two hundred gold crowns, as long as he should sojourn in Geneva. He was admitted into the council of Two Hundred in 1537.

Bonnivard did not now cease to be useful; after having labored to make Geneva free, he succeeded in making it tolerant. Bonnivard prevailed upon the council to accord to the Calvinists and peasants a sufficient time for examining the propositions which were made to them; he succeeded by his meekness. Christianity is always preached with success when it is preached with charity.

Bonnivard was learned. His manuscripts, which are in the public library, prove that he had diligently studied the Latin classics, and that he had penetrated the depths of theology and history. This great man loved the sciences, and thought they would constitute the glory of Geneva; accordingly he neglected nothing to establish them in this rising town. In 1551, he gave his library to the public; it was the commencement of our public library. And a portion of his books are those rare and beautiful editions of the fifteenth century which are seen in our collection. Finally, during the same year, this good patriot appointed the Republic his heir, on condition that it would employ his wealth in supporting the college, the foundation of which was being projected.

It appears that Bonnivard died in 1570; but this cannot be certified, as an hiatus occurs in the Necrology, from the month of July, 1570, to 1571.

SONNET ON CHILLON.

ETERNAL Spirit of the chainless Mind!
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art,
For there thy habitation is the heart—
The heart which love of thee alone can bind;
And when thy sons to fetters are consign'd—
To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.
Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,
And thy sad floor an altar—for 'twas trod,
Until his very steps have left a trace
Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonnivard!—May none those marks efface!
For they appeal from tyranny to God.

THE PRISONER OF CHILLON.

I.

My hair is gray, but not with years,
Nor grew it white
In a single night,*
As men's have grown from sudden fears:
My limbs are bow'd, though not with toil,
But rusted with a vile repose,
For they have been a dungeon's spoil,
And mine has been the fate of those
To whom the goodly earth and air
Are bann'd, and barr'd—forbidden fare;
But this was for my father's faith
I suffer'd chains and courted death;
That father perish'd at the stake
For tenets he would not forsake;
And for the same his lineal race
In darkness found a dwelling-place;
We were seven—who now are one,
Six in youth, and one in age,
Finish'd as they had begun,
Proud of Persecution's rage;
One in fire, and two in field,
Their belief with blood have seal'd;
Dying as their father died,
For the God their foes denied;
Three were in a dungeon cast,
Of whom this wreck is left the last.

II.

There are seven pillars of Gothic mould,
In Chillon's dungeons deep and old,
There are seven columns, massy and gray,
Dim with a dull imprison'd ray,
A sunbeam which hath lost its way,
And through the crevice and the cleft
Of the thick wall is fallen and left;
Creeping o'er the floor so damp,
Like a marsh's meteor lamp;
And in each pillar there is a ring,
And in each ring there is a chain;
That iron is a cankering thing,
For in these limbs its teeth remain,

* Ludovico Sforza, and others.—The same is asserted of Marie Antoinette's, the wife of Louis XVI., though not in quite so short a period. Grief is said to have the same effect: to such, and not to fear, this change in *hers* was to be attributed.

With marks that will not wear away,
Till I have done with this new day,
Which now is painful to these eyes,
Which have not seen the sun so rise
For years—I cannot count them o'er,
I lost their long and heavy score
When my last brother droop'd and died,
And I lay living by his side.

III.

They chain'd us each to a column stone,
And we were three—yet, each alone:
We could not move a single pace,
We could not see each other's face,
But with that pale and livid light
That made us strangers in our sight;
And thus together—yet apart,
Fetter'd in hand, but pined in heart;
'Twas still some solace in the dearth
Of the pure elements of earth,
To hearken to each other's speech,
And each turn comforter to each
With some new hope, or legend old,
Or song heroically bold;
But even these at length grew cold.
Our voices took a dreary tone,
An echo of the dungeon-stone,
A grating sound—not full and free
As they of yore were wont to be;
It might be fancy—but to me
They never sounded like our own.

IV.

I was the eldest of the three,
And to uphold and cheer the rest
I ought to do—and did—my best,
And each did well in his degree.
The youngest, whom my father loved,
Because our mother's brow was given
To him—with eyes as blue as heaven,
For him my soul was sorely moved;
And truly might it be distrest
To see such bird in such a nest;
For he was beautiful as day—
(When day was beautiful to me
As to young eagles, being free)—
A polar day, which will not see
A sunset till its summer's gone,
Its sleepless summer of long light,
The snow-clad offspring of the sun:
And thus he was as pure and bright,
And in his natural spirit gay,
With tears for nought but others' ills,
And then they flow'd like mountain rills,
Unless he could assuage the woe
Which he abhorr'd to view below.

V.

The other was as pure of mind,
But form'd to combat with his kind;
Strong in his frame, and of a mood
Which 'gainst the world in war had stood,
And perish'd in the foremost rank
With joy:—but not in chains to pine:
His spirit wither'd with their clank,
I saw it silently decline—
And so perchance in sooth did mine;
But yet I forced it on to cheer
Those relics of a home so dear.
He was a hunter of the hills,
Had follow'd there the deer and wolf;
To him this dungeon was a gulf,
And fetter'd feet the worst of ills.

VI.

Lake Leman lies by Chillon's walls:
A thousand feet in depth below
Its massy waters meet and flow;
Thus much the fathom-line was sent
From Chillon's snow-white battlement,*
Which round about the wave enthralls:
A double dungeon wall and wave
Have made—and like a living grave.
Below the surface of the lake
The dark vault lies wherein we lay,
We heard it ripple night and day;
Sounding o'er our heads it knock'd;
And I have felt the winter's spray
Wash through the bars when winds were high,
And wanton in the happy sky;
And then the very rock hath rock'd,
And I have felt it shake, unshock'd,
Because I could have smiled to see
The death that would have set me free.

VII.

I said my nearer brother pined,
I said his mighty heart declined,
He loathed and put away his food:

* The Chateau de Chillon is situated between Clarens and Villeneuve, which last is at one extremity of the Lake of Geneva. On its left are the entrances of the Rhone, and opposite are the heights of Meillerie and the range of Alps above Boveret and St. Gingo.

Near it, on a hill behind, is a torrent; below it, washing its walls, the lake has been fathomed to the depth of 800 feet (French measure); within it are a range of dungeons, in which the early Reformers, and subsequently prisoners of state, were confined. Across one of the vaults is a beam black with age, on which we were informed that the condemned were formerly executed. In the cells are seven pillars, or, rather, eight, one being half merged in the wall; in some of these are rings for the fetters and the fettered: in the pavement the steps of Bonnivard have left their traces—he was confined here several years.

It is by this castle that Rousseau has fixed the catastrophe of his Heloise, in the rescue of one of her children by Julie from the water; the shock of which, and the illness produced by the immersion, is the cause of her death.

The chateau is large, and seen along the lake for a great distance. The walls are white.

It was not that 'twas coarse and rude,
For we were used to hunter's fare,
And for the like had little care:
The milk drawn from the mountain goat
Was changed for water from the moat,
Our bread was such as captive's tears
Have moisten'd many a thousand years,
Since man first pent his fellow-men
Like brutes within an iron den:
But what were these to us or him?
These wasted not his heart or limb;
My brother's soul was of that mould
Which in a palace had grown cold,
Had his free breathing been denied
The range of the steep mountain's side;
But why delay the truth?—he died.
I saw, and could not hold his head,
Nor reach his dying hand—nor dead—
Though hard I strove, but strove in vain,
To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.
He died—and they unlock'd his chain,
And scoop'd for him a shallow grave
Even from the cold earth of our cave.
I begg'd them, as a boon, to lay
His corpse in dust whereon the day
Might shine—it was a foolish thought,
But then within my brain it wrought,
That even in death his free-born breast
In such a dungeon could not rest.
I might have spared my idle prayer—
They coldly laugh'd—and laid him there:
The flat and turfless earth above
The being we so much did love;
His empty chain above it leant,
Such murder's fitting monument!

VIII.

But he, the favorite and the flower,
Most cherish'd since his natal hour,
His mother's image in fair face,
The infant love of all his race,
His martyr'd father's dearest thought,
My latest care, for whom I sought
To hoard my life, that his might be
Less wretched now, and one day free;
He, too, who yet had held untired
A spirit natural or inspired—
He, too, was struck, and day by day
Was wither'd on the stalk away.
O God! it is a fearful thing
To see the human soul take wing
In any shape, in any mood:—
I've seen it rushing forth in blood,
I've seen it on the breaking ocean
Strive with a swoln convulsive motion,
I've seen the sick and ghastly bed

Of Sin delirious with its dread:
But these were horrors—this was woe
Unmix'd with such—but sure and slow:
He faded, and so calm and meek,
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,
So tearless, yet so tender—kind,
And grieved for those he left behind
With all the while a cheek whose bloom
Was as a mockery of the tomb,
Whose tints as gently sunk away
As a departing rainbow's ray—
An eye of most transparent light,
That almost made the dungeon bright,
And not a word of murmur—not
A groan o'er his untimely lot—
A little talk of better days,
A little hope my own to raise,
For I was sunk in silence—lost
In this last loss, of all the most;
And then the sighs he would suppress
Of fainting nature's feebleness,
More slowly drawn, grew less and less:
I listen'd, but I could not hear—
I call'd, for I was wild with fear;
I knew 'twas hopeless, but my dread
Would not be thus admonished;
I call'd, and thought I heard a sound—
I burst my chain with one strong bound,
And rush'd to him:—I found him not;
I only stirr'd in this black spot,
I only lived—*I* only drew
The accursed breath of dungeon-dew;
The last—the sole—the dearest link
Between me and the eternal brink,
Which bound me to my failing race,
Was broken in this fatal place.
One on the earth, and one beneath—
My brothers—both had ceased to breathe:
I took that hand which lay so still,
Alas! my own was full as chill;
I had not strength to stir, or strive,
But felt that I was still alive—
A frantic feeling, when we know
That what we love shall ne'er be so,
I know not why
I could not die,
I had no earthly hope—but faith,
And that forbade a selfish death.

IX.

What next befell me then and there
I know not well—I never knew—
First came the loss of light, and air,
And then of darkness too:
I had no thought, no feeling—none—
Among the stones I stood a stone,

And was, scarce conscious what I wist,
As shrubless crags within the mist;
For all was blank, and bleak, and gray,
It was not night—it was not day,
It was not even the dungeon-light,
So hateful to my heavy sight,
But vacancy absorbing space,
And fixedness—without a place;
There were no stars—no earth—no time—
No check—no change—no good—no crime—
But silence, and a stirless breath
Which neither was of life nor death;
A sea of stagnant idleness,
Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless!

X.

A light broke in upon my brain—
  It was the carol of a bird;
It ceased, and then it came again,
  The sweetest song ear ever heard,
And mine was thankful till my eyes
Ran over with the glad surprise,
And they that moment could not see
I was the mate of misery;
But then by dull degrees came back
My senses to their wonted track,
I saw the dungeon walls and floor
Close slowly round me as before,
I saw the glimmer of the sun
Creeping as it before had done,
But through the crevice where it came
That bird was perch'd, as fond and tame,
  And tamer than upon the tree;
A lovely bird, with azure wings,
And song that said a thousand things,
  And seem'd to say them all for me!
I never saw its like before,
I ne'er shall see its likeness more:
It seem'd, like me, to want a mate,
But was not half so desolate,
And it was come to love me when
None lived to love me so again,
And cheering from my dungeon's brink,
Had brought me back to feel and think.
I know not if it late were free,
  Or broke its cage to perch on mine,
But knowing well captivity,
  Sweet bird! I could not wish for thine!
Or if it were, in winged guise,
A visitant from Paradise;
For—Heaven forgive that thought! the while
Which made me both to weep and smile—
I sometimes deem'd that it might be
My brother's soul come down to me;
But then at last away it flew,
And then 'twas mortal—well I knew,

For he would never thus have flown,
And left me twice so doubly lone—
Lone—as the corpse within its shroud,
Lone—as a solitary cloud,
A single cloud on a sunny day,
While all the rest of heaven is clear,
A frown upon the atmosphere,
That hath no business to appear
When skies are blue, and earth is gay.

XI.

A kind of change came in my fate,
My keepers grew compassionate,
I know not what had made them so,
They were inured to sights of woe,
But so it was:—my broken chain
With links unfasten'd did remain,
And it was liberty to stride
Along my cell from side to side,
And up and down, and then athwart,
And tread it over every part;
And round the pillars one by one,
Returning where my walk begun,
Avoiding only, as I trod,
My brothers' graves without a sod;
For if I thought with heedless tread
My step profaned their lowly bed,
My breath came gaspingly and thick,
And my crush'd heart fell blind and sick.

XII.

I made a footing in the wall,
It was not therefrom to escape,
For I had buried one and all,
Who loved me in a human shape;
And the whole earth would henceforth be
A wider prison unto me:
No child—no sire—no kin had I,
No partner in my misery;
I thought of this, and I was glad,
For thought of them had made me mad:
But I was curious to ascend
To my barr'd windows, and to bend
Once more, upon the mountains high,
The quiet of a loving eye.

XIII.

I saw them—and they were the same,
They were not changed like me in frame;
I saw their thousand years of snow
On high—their wide long lake below,
And the blue Rhone in fullest flow:
I heard the torrents leap and gush
O'er channell'd rock and broken bush;
I saw the white-wall'd distant town,
And whiter sails go skimming down;
And then there was a little isle,*

* Between the entrances of the Rhone and Villeneuve, not far from Chillon.

Which in my very face did smile,
The only one in view;
A small green isle, it seem'd no more,
Scarce broader than my dungeon floor,
But in it there were three tall trees,
And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,
And by it there were waters flowing,
And on it there were young flowers growing,
Of gentle breath and hue.
The fish swam by the castle wall,
And they seem'd joyous each and all;
The eagle rode the rising blast,
Methought he never flew so fast
As then to me he seem'd to fly.
And then new tears came in my eye,
And I felt troubled—and would fain
I had not left my recent chain;
And when I did descend again,
The darkness of my dim abode
Fell on me as a heavy load;
It was as is a new-dug grave,
Closing o'er one we sought to save,
And yet my glance, too much oppress,
Had almost need of such a rest.

XIV.

It might be months, or years, or days,
I kept no count—I took no note,
I had no hope my eyes to raise,
And clear them of their dreary mote;
At last men came to set me free,
I ask'd not why, and reck'd not where,
It was at length the same to me,
Fetter'd or fetterless to be,
I learn'd to love despair.
And thus when they appear'd at last,
And all my bonds aside were cast,
These heavy walls to me had grown
A hermitage—and all my own!
And half I felt as they were come
To tear me from my second home:
With spiders I had friendship made,
And watch'd them in their sullen trade,
Had seen the mice by moonlight play,
And why should I feel less than they?
We were all inmates of one place,
And I, the monarch of each race,
Had power to kill—yet, strange to tell!
In quiet we had learn'd to dwell—
My very chains and I grew friends,
So much a long communion tends
To make us what we are:—even I
Regain'd my freedom with a sigh.

is a very small island; the only one I could perceive, in my voyage round and over the lake, within its circumference. It contains a few trees (I think not above three), and from its singleness and diminutive size has a peculiar effect upon the view.

THE DREAM.

I.

Our life is twofold: Sleep hath its own world,
A boundary between the things misnamed
Death and existence: Sleep hath its own world,
And a wide realm of wild reality,
And dreams in their development have breath,
And tears, and tortures, and the touch of joy;
They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts,
They take a weight from off our waking toils,
They do divide our being; they become
A portion of ourselves as of our time,
And look like heralds of eternity;
They pass like spirits of the past—they speak
Like sibyls of the future; they have power—
The tyranny of pleasure and of pain;
They make us what we were not—what they will,
And shake us with the vision that's gone by,
The dread of vanish'd shadows—Are they so?
Is not the past all shadow? What are they?
Creations of the mind?—The mind can make
Substance, and people planets of its own
With beings brighter than have been, and give
A breath to forms which can outlive all flesh.
I would recall a vision which I dream'd
Perchance in sleep—for in itself a thought,
A slumbering thought, is capable of years,
And curdles a long life into one hour.

II.

I saw two beings in the hues of youth
Standing upon a hill, a gentle hill,
Green and of mild declivity, the last
As 'twere the cape of a long ridge of such,
Save that there was no sea to lave its base,
But a most living landscape, and the wave
Of woods and cornfields, and the abodes of men
Scatter'd at intervals, and wreathing smoke
Arising from such rustic roofs;—the hill
Was crown'd with a peculiar diadem
Of trees, in circular array, so fix'd,
Not by the sport of nature, but of man:

These two, a maiden and a youth, were there
Gazing—the one on all that was beneath
Fair as herself—but the boy gazed on her;
And both were young, and one was beautiful:
And both were young—yet not alike in youth.
As the sweet moon on the horizon's verge,
The maid was on the eve of womanhood;
The boy had fewer summers, but his heart
Had far outgrown his years, and to his eye
There was but one beloved face on earth,
And that was shining on him; he had look'd
Upon it till it could not pass away;
He had no breath, no being, but in hers:
She was his voice; he did not speak to her,
But trembled on her words: she was his sight,
For his eye follow'd hers, and saw with hers,
Which color'd all his objects:—he had ceased
To live within himself; she was his life,
The ocean to the river of his thoughts,
Which terminated all: upon a tone,
A touch of hers, his blood would ebb and flow,
And his cheek change tempestuously—his heart
Unknowing of its cause of agony.
But she in these fond feelings had no share:
Her sighs were not for him; to her he was
Even as a brother—but no more; 'twas much,
For brotherless she was, save in the name
Her infant friendship had bestow'd on him:
Herself the solitary scion left
Of a time-honor'd race.—It was a name
Which pleased him, and yet pleased him not—and why?
Time taught him a deep answer—when she loved
Another; even *now* she loved another,
And on the summit of that hill she stood
Looking afar if yet her lover's steed
Kept pace with her expectancy, and flew.

III.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
There was an ancient mansion, and before
Its walls there was a steed caparison'd:
Within an antique Oratory stood
The Boy of whom I spake;—he was alone,
And pale, and pacing to and fro: anon
He sate him down, and seized a pen, and traced
Words which I could not guess of; then he lean'd
His bow'd head on his hands, and shook as 'twere
With a convulsion—then rose again,
And with his teeth and quivering hands did tear
What he had written, but he shed no tears.
And he did calm himself, and fix his brow
Into a kind of quiet: as he paused,
The Lady of his love re-enter'd there;
She was serene and smiling then, and yet
She knew she was by him beloved;—she knew—
For quickly comes such knowledge—that his heart

Was darken'd with her shadow, and she saw
That he was wretched, but she saw not all.
He rose, and with a cold and gentle grasp
He took her hand; a moment o'er his face
A tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced, and then it faded, as it came:
He dropp'd the hand he held, and with slow steps
Retired, but not as bidding her adieu,
For they did part with mutual smiles; he pass'd
From out the massy gate of that old Hall,
And mounting on his steed he went his way;
And ne'er repass'd that hoary threshold more.

IV.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Boy was sprung to manhood: in the wilds
Of fiery climes he made himself a home,
And his soul drank their sunbeams: he was girt
With strange and dusky aspects; he was not
Himself like what he had been; on the sea
And on the shore he was a wanderer;
There was a mass of many images
Crowded like waves upon me, but he was
A part of all; and in the last he lay
Reposing from the noontide sultriness,
Couch'd among fallen columns, in the shade
Of ruin'd walls that had survived the names
Of those who rear'd them; by his sleeping side
Stood camels grazing, and some goodly steeds
Were fasten'd near a fountain; and a man,
Clad in a flowing garb, did watch the while,
While many of his tribe slumber'd around:
And they were canopied by the blue sky,
So cloudless, clear, and purely beautiful,
That God alone was to be seen in heaven

V.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Lady of his love was wed with One
Who did not love her better:—in her home,
A thousand leagues from his—her native home,
She dwelt, begirt with growing Infancy,
Daughters and sons of Beauty—but behold!
Upon her face there was the tint of grief,
The settled shadow of an inward strife,
And an unquiet drooping of the eye,
As if its lid were charged with unshed tears,
What could her grief be?—she had all she loved,
And he who had so loved her was not there
To trouble with bad hopes, or evil wish,
Or ill-repress'd affliction, her pure thoughts.
What could her grief be?—she had loved him not,
Nor given him cause to deem himself beloved,
Nor could he be a part of that which prey'd
Upon her mind—a spectre of the past.

VI.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Wanderer was return'd.—I saw him stand
Before an Altar—with a gentle bride;
Her face was fair, but was not that which made
The Starlight of his Boyhood;—as he stood
Even at the altar, o'er his brow there came
The selfsame aspect, and the quivering shock
That in the antique Oratory shook
His bosom in its solitude; and then—
As in that hour—a moment o'er his face
The tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced—and then it faded as it came,
And he stood calm and quiet, and he spoke
The fitting vows, but heard not his own words,
And all things reel'd around him; he could see
Not that which was, nor that which should have been—
But the old mansion, and the accustom'd hall,
And the remember'd chambers, and the place,
The day, the hour, the sunshine, and the shade,
All things pertaining to that place and hour,
And her who was his destiny, came back
And thrust themselves between him and the light:
What business had they there at such a time?

VII.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Lady of his love;—oh! she was changed,
As by the sickness of the soul; her mind
Had wander'd from its dwelling, and her eyes,
They had not their own lustre, but the look
Which is not of the earth; she was become
The queen of a fantastic realm; her thoughts
Were combinations of disjointed things;
And forms impalpable and unperceived
Of others' sight familiar were to hers.
And this the world calls frenzy: but the wise
Have a far deeper madness, and the glance
Of melancholy is a fearful gift;
What is it but the telescope of truth?
Which strips the distance of its fantasies,
And brings life near in utter nakedness,
Making the cold reality too real!

VIII.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Wanderer was alone as heretofore,
The beings which surrounded him were gone,
Or were at war with him; he was a mark
For blight and desolation, compass'd round
With Hatred and Contention; Pain was mix'd
In all which was served up to him, until,
Like to the Pontic monarch of old days,
He fed on poisons, and they had no power,
But were a kind of nutriment; he lived
Through that which had been death to many men,

And made him friends of mountains: with the stars
And the quick Spirit of the Universe
He held his dialogues; and they did teach
To him the magic of their mysteries;
To him the book of Night was open'd wide,
And voices from the deep abyss reveal'd
A marvel and a secret.—Be it so.

IX.

My dream is past; it had no further charge.
It was of a strange order, that the doom
Of these two creatures should be thus traced out
Almost like a reality—the one
To end in madness—both in misery.

THE LAMENT OF TASSO.

ADVERTISEMENT.

At Ferrara, in the Library, are preserved the original MSS. of Tasso's "Gierusalemme" and of Guarini's "Pastor Fido," with letters of Tasso, one from Titian to Ariosto, and the inkstand and chair, the tomb and house, of the latter. But, as misfortune has a greater interest for posterity, and little or none for the contemporary, the cell where Tasso was confined in the hospital of St. Anna attracts a more fixed attention than the residence or monument of Ariosto—at least it had this effect on me. There are two inscriptions, one on the outer gate, the second over the cell itself, inviting, unnecessarily, the wonder and the indignation of the spectator. Ferrara is much decayed and depopulated: the castle still exists entire; and I saw the court where Parisina and Hugo were beheaded, according to the annal of Gibbon.

THE LAMENT OF TASSO.

I.

Long years!—It tries the thrilling frame to bear
And eagle-spirit of a child of Song—
Long years of outrage, calumny, and wrong;
Imputed madness, prison'd solitude,
And the mind's canker in its savage mood,
When the impatient thirst of light and air
Parches the heart; and the abhorred grate,
Marring the sunbeams with its hideous shade,
Works through the throbbing eyeball to the brain,
With a hot sense of heaviness and pain;
And bare, at once, Captivity display'd
Stands scoffing through the never-open'd gate,
Which nothing through its bars admits, save day,
And tasteless food, which I have ate alone
Till its unsocial bitterness is gone;
And I can banquet like a beast of prey,
Sullen and lonely, couching in the cave
Which is my lair, and—it may be—my grave.
All this hath somewhat worn me, and may wear,
But must be borne. I stoop not to despair;
For I have battled with mine agony,
And made me wings wherewith to overfly
The narrow circus of my dungeon wall,
And freed the Holy Sepulchre from thrall:
And revell'd among men and things divine,
And pour'd my spirit over Palestine,
In honor of the sacred war for Him,
The God who was on earth and is in heaven,
For He has strengthen'd me in heart and limb.
That through this sufferance I might be forgiven,
I have employ'd my penance to record
How Salem's shrine was won and how adored.

II.

But this is o'er—my pleasant task is done:—
My long-sustaining friend of many years!
If I do blot thy final page with tears,
Know, that my sorrows have wrung from me none.
But thou, my young creation! my soul's child!
Which ever playing round me came and smiled,

And woo'd me from myself with thy sweet sight,
Thou too art gone—and so is my delight:
And therefore do I weep and inly bleed
With this last bruise upon a broken reed.
Thou too art ended—what is left me now?
For I have anguish yet to bear—and how?
I know not that—but in the innate force
Of my own spirit shall be found resource.
I have not sunk, for I had no remorse,
Nor cause for such: they call'd me mad—and why?
O Leonora! wilt not *thou* reply?
I was indeed delirious in my heart
To lift my love so lofty as thou art;
But still my frenzy was not of the mind;
I knew my fault, and feel my punishment
Not less because I suffer it unbent.
That thou wert beautiful, and I not blind,
Hath been the sin which shuts me from mankind;
But let them go, or torture as they will,
My heart can multiply thine image still;
Successful love may sate itself away,
The wretched are the faithful; 'tis their fate
To have all feeling save the one decay,
And every passion into one dilate,
As rapid rivers into ocean pour;
But ours is fathomless, and hath no shore.

III.

Above me, hark! the long and maniac cry
Of minds and bodies in captivity,
And hark! the lash and the increasing howl,
And the half-inarticulate blasphemy!
There be some here with worse than frenzy foul,
Some who do still goad on the o'erlabor'd mind,
And dim the little light that 's left behind
With needless torture, as their tyrant will
Is wound up to the lust of doing ill:
With these and with their victims am I class'd,
'Mid sounds and sights like these long years have pass'd:
'Mid sounds and sights like these my life may close:
So let it be—for then I shall repose.

IV.

I have been patient, let me be so yet;
I had forgotten half I would forget,
But it revives—oh! would it were my lot
To be forgetful as I am forgot!—
Feel I not wroth with those who bade me dwell
In this vast lazar-house of many woes?
Where laughter is not mirth, nor thought the mind,
Nor words a language, nor even men mankind;
Where cries reply to curses, shrieks to blows,
And each is tortured in his separate hell—
For we are crowded in our solitudes—
Many, but each divided by the wall,
Which echoes Madness in her babbling moods:—

While all can hear, none heed his neighbor's call—
None! save that One, the veriest wretch of all,
Who was not made to be the mate of these,
Nor bound between Distraction and Disease.
Feel I not wroth with those who placed me here?
Who have debased me in the minds of men,
Debarring me the usage of my own,
Blighting my life in best of its career,
Branding my thoughts as things to shun and fear?
Would I not pay them back these pangs again,
And teach them inward Sorrow's stifled groan?
The struggle to be calm, and cold distress,
Which undermines our Stoical success?
No!—still too proud to be vindictive—I
Have pardon'd princes' insults, and would die.
Yes, Sister of my Sovereign! for thy sake
I weed all bitterness from out my breast,
It hath no business where *thou* art a guest;
Thy brother hates—but I can not detest;
Thou pitiest not—but I can not forsake.

v.

Look on a love which knows not to despair,
But all unquench'd is still my better part,
Dwelling deep in my shut and silent heart,
As dwells the gather'd lightning in its cloud,
Encompass'd with its dark and rolling shroud,
Till struck—forth flies the all-ethereal dart!
And thus at the collision of thy name
The vivid thought still flashes through my frame,
And for a moment all things as they were
Flit by me;—they are gone—I am the same.
And yet my love without ambition grew;
I knew thy state, my station, and I knew
A Princess was no love-mate for a bard;
I told it not, I breathed it not, it was
Sufficient to itself, its own reward;
And if my eyes reveal'd it, they, alas!
Were punish'd by the silentness of thine,
And yet I did not venture to repine.
Thou wert to me a crystal-girded shrine
Worshipp'd at holy distance, and around
Hallow'd and meekly kiss'd the saintly ground;
Not for thou wert a princess, but that Love
Had robed thee with a glory, and array'd
Thy lineaments in a beauty that dismay'd—
Oh! not dismay'd—but awed, like One above!
And in that sweet severity there was
A something which all softness did surpass—
I know not how—thy genius master'd mine—
My star stood still before thee:—if it were
Presumptuous thus to love without design,
That sad fatality hath cost me dear;
But thou art dearest still, and I should be
Fit for this cell, which wrongs me—but for *thee*.

The very love which lock'd me to my chain
Hath lighten'd half its weight; and for the rest,
Though heavy, lent me vigor to sustain,
And look to thee with undivided breast,
And foil the ingenuity of Pain.

VI.

It is no marvel—from my very birth
My soul was drunk with love—which did pervade
And mingle with whate'er I saw on earth;
Of objects all inanimate I made
Idols, and out of wild and lonely flowers,
And rocks, whereby they grew, a paradise,
Where I did lay me down within the shade
Of waving trees, and dream'd uncounted hours,
Though I was chid for wandering; and the Wise
Shook their white aged heads o'er me, and said
Of such materials wretched men were made,
And such a truant boy would end in woe,
And that the only lesson was a blow;
And then they smote me, and I did not weep,
But cursed them in my heart, and to my haunt
Return'd and wept alone, and dream'd again
The visions which arise without a sleep.
And with my years my soul began to pant
With feelings of strange tumult and soft pain;
And the whole heart exhaled into One Want,
But undefined and wandering, till the day
I found the thing I sought—and that was thee;
And then I lost my being all to be
Absorb'd in thine—the world was pass'd away—
Thou didst annihilate the earth to me!

VII.

I loved all Solitude—but little thought
To spend I know not what of life, remote
From all communion with existence, save
The maniac and his tyrant;—had I been
Their fellow, many years ere this had seen
My mind like theirs corrupted to its grave,
But who hath seen me writhe, or heard me rave?
Perchance in such a cell we suffer more
Than the wreck'd sailor on his desert shore:
The world is all before him—*mine* is *here*,
Scarce twice the space they must accord my bier.
What though *he* perish, he may lift his eye
And with a dying glance upbraid the sky—
I will not raise my own in such reproof,
Although 'tis clouded by my dungeon roof.

VIII.

Yet do I feel at times my mind decline,
But with a sense of its decay:—I see
Unwonted lights along my prison shine,
And a strange demon, who is vexing me
With pilfering pranks and petty pains, below

The feeling of the healthful and the free;
But much to One, who long hath suffer'd so,
Sickness of heart, and narrowness of place,
And all that may be borne, or can debase.
I thought mine enemies had been but Man,
But spirits may be leagued with them—all Earth
Abandons—Heaven forgets me;—in the dearth
Of such defence the Powers of Evil can,
It may be, tempt me further—and prevail
Against the outworn creature they assail.
Why in this furnace is my spirit proved
Like steel in tempering fire?—because I loved?
Because I loved what not to love, and see,
Was more or less than mortal, and than me.

IX.

I once was quick in feeling—that is o'er;—
My scars are callous, or I should have dash'd
My brain against these bars, as the sun flash'd
In mockery through them;—If I bear and bore
The much I have recounted, and the more
Which hath no words,—'tis that I would not die
And sanction with self-slaughter the dull lie
Which snared me here, and with the brand of shame
Stamp Madness deep into my memory,
And woo Compassion to a blighted name,
Sealing the sentence which my foes proclaim.
No—it shall be immortal!—and I make
A future temple of my present cell,
Which nations yet shall visit for my sake.
While thou, Ferrara! when no longer dwell
The ducal chiefs within thee, shalt fall down,
And crumbling piecemeal view thy hearthless halls,
A poet's wreath shall be thine only crown—
A poet's dungeon thy most far renown,
While strangers wander o'er thy unpeopled walls!
And thou, Leonora!—thou—who wert ashamed
That such as I could love—who blush'd to hear
To less than monarchs that thou couldst be dear,
Go! tell thy brother, that my heart, untamed
By grief, years, weariness—and it may be
A taint of that he would impute to me,
From long infection of a den like this,
Where the mind rots congenial with the abyss—
Adores thee still;—and add—that when the towers
And battlements which guard his joyous hours
Of banquet, dance, and revel are forgot,
Or left untended in a dull repose,
This—this—shall be a consecrated spot!
But thou—when all that Birth and Beauty throws
Of magic round thee is extinct—shalt have
One half the laurel which o'ershades my grave.
No power in death can tear our names apart,
As none in life could rend thee from my heart.
Yes, Leonora! it shall be our fate
To be entwined for ever—but too late!

MANFRED:

A DRAMATIC POEM.

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

Dramatis Personæ.

Manfred.	Witch of the Alps.
Chamois Hunter.	Arimanes.
Abbot of St. Maurice.	Nemesis.
Manuel.	The Destinies.
Herman.	Spirits, &c.

The Scene of the Drama is among the Higher Alps—partly in the Castle of Manfred, and partly in the Mountains.

MANFRED.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

MANFRED *alone.—Scene, a Gothic Gallery.—Time, Midnight.*

Man. The lamp must be replenish'd, but even then
It will not burn so long as I must watch:
My slumbers—if I slumber—are not sleep,
But a continuance of enduring thought,
Which then I can resist not: in my heart
There is a vigil, and these eyes but close
To look within; and yet I live, and bear
The aspect and the form of breathing men.
But grief should be the instructor of the wise;
Sorrow is knowledge: they who know the most
Must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal truth,
The Tree of Knowledge is not that of Life.
Philosophy and science, and the springs
Of wonder, and the wisdom of the world,
I have essay'd, and in my mind there is
A power to make these subject to itself—
But they avail not: I have done men good,
And I have met with good even among men—
But this avail'd not:—Good, or evil, life,
Powers, passions, all I see in other beings,
Have been to me as rain unto the sands,
Since that all-nameless hour. I have no dread,
And feel the curse to have no natural fear,
Nor fluttering throb, that beats with hopes or wishes,
Or lurking love of something on the earth.—
Now to my task.—
Mysterious Agency!
Ye spirits of the unbounded Universe!
Whom I have sought in darkness and in light—
Ye, who do compass earth about, and dwell
In subtler essence—ye, to whom the tops
Of mountains inaccessible are haunts,
And earth's and ocean's caves familiar things—
I call upon ye by the written charm
Which gives me power upon you——Rise! appear!
[*A pause.*

They come not yet.—Now by the voice of him
Who is the first among you—by this sign,
Which makes you tremble—by the claims of him
Who is undying—Rise! appear!——Appear!
[A pause.
If it be so.—Spirits of earth and air,
Ye shall not thus elude me: by a power
Deeper than all yet urged, a tyrant-spell,
Which had its birthplace in a star condemn'd,
The burning wreck of a demolish'd world,
A wandering hell in the eternal space;
By the strong curse which is upon my soul,
The thought which is within me and around me,
I do compel ye to my will.—Appear!

[A star is seen at the darker end of the gallery: it is stationary; and a voice is heard singing.

FIRST SPIRIT.

Mortal! to thy bidding bow'd,
From my mansion in the cloud,
Which the breath of twilight builds,
And the summer's sunlight gilds
With the azure and vermilion,
Which is mix'd for my pavilion;
Though thy quest may be forbidden,
On a star-beam I have ridden;
To thine adjuration bow'd,
Mortal! be thy wish avow'd!

Voice of the SECOND SPIRIT.

Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains:
They crown'd him long ago
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,
With a diadem of snow.
Around his waist are forests braced,
The Avalanche in his hand;
But ere it fall, that thundering ball
Must pause for my command.
The Glacier's cold and restless mass
Moves onward day by day;
But I am he who bids it pass,
Or with its ice delay.
I am the spirit of the place,
Could make the mountain bow
And quiver to his cavern'd base—
And what with me wouldst *Thou?*

Voice of the THIRD SPIRIT.

In the blue depth of the waters,
Where the wave hath no strife,
Where the wind is a stranger,
And the sea-snake hath life,
Where the Mermaid is decking
Her green hair with shells;
Like the storm on the surface
Came the sound of thy spells;

O'er my calm Hall of Coral
The deep echo roll'd—
To the Spirit of Ocean
Thy wishes unfold!

FOURTH SPIRIT.

Where the slumbering earthquake
Lies pillow'd on fire,
And the lakes of bitumen
Rise boilingly higher;
Where the roots of the Andes
Strike deep in the earth,
As their summits to heaven
Shoot soaringly forth;
I have quitted my birthplace,
Thy bidding to bide—
Thy spell hath subdued me,
Thy will be my guide!

FIFTH SPIRIT.

I am the Rider of the wind,
The Stirrer of the storm;
The hurricane I left behind
Is yet with lightning warm;
To speed to thee, o'er shore and sea
I swept upon the blast:
The fleet I met sail'd well, and yet
'Twill sink ere night be past.

SIXTH SPIRIT.

My dwelling is the shadow of the night.
Why doth thy magic torture me with light?

SEVENTH SPIRIT.

The star which rules thy destiny
Was ruled, ere earth began, by me:
It was a world as fresh and fair
As e'er revolved round sun in air;
Its course was free and regular,
Space bosom'd not a lovelier star.
The hour arrived—and it became
A wandering mass of shapeless flame,
A pathless comet, and a curse,
The menace of the universe:
Still rolling on with innate force,
Without a sphere, without a course,
A bright deformity on high,
The monster of the upper sky!
And thou! beneath its influence born—
Thou worm! whom I obey and scorn—
Forced by a power (which is not thine,
And lent thee but to make thee mine)
For this brief moment to descend,
Where these weak spirits round thee bend
And parley with a thing like thee—
What wouldst thou, Child of Clay! with me?

The SEVEN SPIRITS.

Earth, ocean, air, night, mountains, winds, thy star,
Are at thy beck and bidding, Child of Clay!
Before thee at thy quest their spirits are—
What wouldst thou with us, son of mortals—say?

Man. Forgetfulness——
First Spirit. Of what—of whom—and why?
Man. Of that which is within me; read it there—
Ye know it, and I cannot utter it.
Spirit. We can but give thee that which we possess:
Ask of us subjects, sovereignty, the power
O'er earth, the whole, or portion, or a sign
Which shall control the elements, whereof
We are the dominators, each and all,
These shall be thine.
Man. Oblivion, self-oblivion—
Can ye not wring from out the hidden realms
Ye offer so profusely what I ask?
Spirit. It is not in our essence, in our skill;
But—thou may'st die.
Man. Will death bestow it on me?
Spirit. We are immortal, and do not forget;
We are eternal, and to us the past
Is as the future, present. Art thou answer'd?
Man. Ye mock me—but the power which brought ye here
Hath made you mine. Slaves, scoff not at my will!
The mind, the spirit, the Promethean spark,
The lightning of my being, is as bright,
Pervading, and far-darting as your own,
And shall not yield to yours, though coop'd in clay!
Answer, or I will teach you what I am.
Spirit. We answer as we answer'd; our reply
Is even in thine own words.
Man. Why say ye so?
Spirit. If, as thou say'st, thine essence be as ours,
We have replied in telling thee, the thing
Mortals call death hath nought to do with us.
Man. I then have call'd ye from your realms in vain;
Ye cannot, or ye will not, aid me.
Spirit. Say;
What we possess we offer; it is thine:
Bethink ere thou dismiss us, ask again—
Kingdom, and sway, and strength, and length of days——
Man. Accursed! what have I to do with days?
They are too long already.—Hence—begone!
Spirit. Yet pause: being here, our will would do thee
service;
Bethink thee, is there then no other gift
Which we can make not worthless in thine eyes?
Man. No, none; yet stay—one moment, ere we part—
I would behold ye face to face. I hear
Your voices, sweet and melancholy sounds,
As music on the waters; and I see
The steady aspect of a clear large star;

But nothing more. Approach me as ye are,
Or one, or all, in your accustom'd forms.
Spirit. We have no forms beyond the elements
Of which we are the mind and principle:
But choose a form—in that we will appear.
Man. I have no choice; there is no form on earth
Hideous or beautiful to me. Let him,
Who is most powerful of ye, take such aspect
As unto him may seem most fitting—Come!
Seventh Spirit. (*Appearing in the shape of a beautiful female figure.*) Behold!
Man. O God! if it be thus, and *thou*
Art not a madness and a mockery,
I yet might be most happy. I will clasp thee,
And we again will be—— [*The figure vanishes.*
My heart is crush'd.
[MANFRED *falls senseless.*

A voice is heard in the Incantation which follows.

When the moon is on the wave,
And the glow-worm in the grass,
And the meteor on the grave,
And the wisp on the morass;
When the falling stars are shooting,
And the answer'd owls are hooting,
And the silent leaves are still
In the shadow of the hill,
Shall my soul be upon thine,
With a power and with a sign.

Though thy slumber may be deep,
Yet thy spirit shall not sleep;
There are shades which will not vanish,
There are thoughts thou canst not banish;
By a power to thee unknown,
Thou canst never be alone;
Thou art wrapt as with a shroud,
Thou art gather'd in a cloud;
And for ever thou shalt dwell
In the spirit of this spell.

Though thou seest me not pass by,
Thou shalt feel me with thine eye
As a thing that, though unseen,
Must be near thee, and hath been;
And when in that secret dread
Thou hast turn'd around thy head,
Thou shalt marvel I am not
As thy shadow on the spot,
And the power which thou dost feel
Shall be what thou must conceal.

And a magic voice and verse
Hath baptized thee with a curse;
And a spirit of the air
Hath begirt thee with a snare:
In the wind there is a voice
Shall forbid thee to rejoice;

And to thee shall Night deny
All the quiet of her sky;
All the day shall have a sun,
Which shall make thee wish it done.

From thy false tears I did distil
An essence which hath strength to kill;
From thy own heart I then did wring
The black blood in its blackest spring;
From thy own smile I snatch'd the snake,
For there it coil'd as in a brake;
From thy own lip I drew the charm
Which gave all these their chiefest harm;
In proving every poison known,
I found the strongest was thine own.

By thy cold breast and serpent smile,
By thy unfathom'd gulfs of guile,
By that most seeming virtuous eye,
By thy shut soul's hypocrisy;
By the perfection of thine art
Which pass'd for human thine own heart;
By thy delight in others' pain,
And by thy brotherhood of Cain,
I call upon thee! and compel
Thyself to be thy proper Hell!

And on thy head I pour the vial
Which doth devote thee to this trial;
Nor to slumber, nor to die,
Shall be in thy destiny;
Though thy death shall still seem near
To thy wish, but as a fear;
Lo! the spell now works around thee,
And the clankless chain hath bound thee;
O'er thy heart and brain together
Hath the word been pass'd—now wither!

SCENE II.

The Mountain of the Jungfrau.—Time, Morning.—MANFRED *alone upon the Cliffs.*

Man. The spirits I have raised abandon me—
The spells which I have studied baffle me—
The remedy I reck'd of tortured me;
I lean no more on superhuman aid,
It hath no power upon the past, and for
The future, till the past be gulf'd in darkness,
It is not of my search.—My mother Earth!
And thou fresh breaking Day, and you, ye Mountains,
Why are ye beautiful? I cannot love ye.
And thou, the bright eye of the universe,
That openest over all, and unto all
Art a delight—thou shin'st not on my heart.
And you, ye crags, upon whose extreme edge
I stand, and on the torrent's brink beneath
Behold the tall pines dwindled as to shrubs

In dizziness of distance; when a leap,
A stir, a motion, even a breath, would bring
My breast upon its rocky bosom's bed
To rest for ever—wherefore do I pause?
I feel the impulse—yet I do not plunge;
I see the peril—yet do not recede;
And my brain reels—and yet my foot is firm:
There is a power upon me which withholds,
And makes it my fatality to live;
If it be life to wear within myself
This barrenness of spirit, and to be
My own soul's sepulchre, for I have ceased
To justify my deeds unto myself—
The last infirmity of evil. Ay,
Thou winged and cloud-cleaving minister,
[*An eagle passes.*
Whose happy flight is highest into heaven,
Well may'st thou swoop so near me—I should be
Thy prey, and gorge thine eaglets; thou art gone
Where the eye cannot follow thee; but thine
Yet pierces downward, onward, or above,
With a pervading vision.—Beautiful!
How beautiful is all this visible world!
How glorious in its action and itself!
But we, who name ourselves its sovereigns, we,
Half dust, half deity, alike unfit
To sink or soar, with our mix'd essence, make
A conflict of its elements, and breathe
The breath of degradation and of pride,
Contending with low wants and lofty will,
Till our mortality predominates,
And men are—what they name not to themselves,
And trust not to each other. Hark! the note,
[*The Shepherd's pipe in the distance is heard.*
The natural music of the mountain reed—
For here the patriarchal days are not
A pastoral fable—pipes in the liberal air,
Mix'd with the sweet bells of the sauntering herd;
My soul would drink those echoes.—Oh that I were
The viewless spirit of a lovely sound,
A living voice, a breathing harmony,
A bodiless enjoyment—born and dying
With the blest tone which made me!

Enter from below a CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Chamois Hunter. Even so.
This way the chamois leapt: her nimble feet
Have baffled me; my gains to-day will scarce
Repay my break-neck travail.—What is here?
Who seems not of my trade, and yet hath reach'd
A height which none even of our mountaineers,
Save our best hunters, may attain: his garb
Is goodly, his mien manly, and his air
Proud as a free-born peasant's, at this distance—
I will approach him nearer.

Man. (*not perceiving the other.*) To be thus—

Gray-hair'd with anguish, like these blasted pines,
Wrecks of a single winter, barkless, branchless,
A blighted trunk upon a cursed root,
Which but supplies a feeling to decay—
And to be thus, eternally but thus,
Having been otherwise! Now furrow'd o'er
With wrinkles, plough'd by moments, not by years
And hours—all tortured into ages—hours
Which I outlive!—Ye toppling crags of ice!
Ye avalanches, whom a breath draws down
In mountainous o'erwhelming, come and crush me!
I hear ye momently above, beneath,
Crash with a frequent conflict; but ye pass,
And only fall on things that still would live;
On the young flourishing forest, or the hut
And hamlet of the harmless villager.

C. Hun. The mists begin to rise from up the valley;
I'll warn him to descend, or he may chance
To lose at once his way and life together.

Man. The mists boil up around the glaciers; clouds
Rise curling fast beneath me, white and sulphury,
Like foam from the roused ocean of deep Hell,
Whose every wave breaks on a living shore,
Heap'd with the damn'd like pebbles.—I am giddy.

C. Hun. I must approach him cautiously; if near,
A sudden step will startle him, and he
Seems tottering already.

Man. Mountains have fallen,
Leaving a gap in the clouds, and with the shock
Rocking their Alpine brethren; filling up
The ripe green valleys with destruction's splinters;
Damming the rivers with a sudden dash,
Which crush'd the waters into mist, and made
Their fountains find another channel—Thus,
Thus, in its old age, did Mount Rosenberg—
Why stood I not beneath it?

C. Hun. Friend! have a care
Your next step may be fatal:—for the love
Of Him who made you, stand not on that brink!

Man. (*not hearing him.*) Such would have been for me a fitting tomb;
My bones had then been quiet in their depth:
They had not then been strewn upon the rocks
For the wind's pastime—as thus—thus they shall be—
In this one plunge.—Farewell, ye opening heavens!
Look not upon me thus reproachfully—
You were not meant for me—Earth! take these atoms!

[*As* MANFRED *is in act to spring from the cliff, the* CHAMOIS HUNTER *seizes and retains him with a sudden grasp.*

C. Hun. Hold, madman!—though aweary of thy life,
Stain not our pure vales with thy guilty blood—
Away with me——I will not quit my hold.

Man. I am most sick at heart—nay, grasp me not—
I am all feebleness—the mountains whirl
Spinning around me——I grow blind——What art thou?

C. Hun. I'll answer that anon.—Away with me——
The clouds grow thicker——there—now lean on me—
Place your foot here—here, take this staff, and cling
A moment to that shrub—now give me your hand,
And hold fast by my girdle—softly—well—
The Chalet will be gain'd within an hour—
Come on, we'll quickly find a surer footing.
And something like a pathway, which the torrent
Hath wash'd since winter.—Come, 'tis bravely done—
You should have been a hunter.—Follow me.

[*As they descend the rocks with difficulty, the scene closes*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A Cottage among the Bernese Alps.—MANFRED *and the* CHAMOIS HUNTER.

C. Hun. No, no—yet pause—thou must not yet go forth:
Thy mind and body are alike unfit
To trust each other, for some hours at least;
When thou art better, I will be thy guide—
But whither?

Man. It imports not: I do know
My route full well, and need no further guidance.

C. Hun. Thy garb and gait bespeak thee of high lineage—
One of the many chiefs, whose castled crags
Look o'er the lower valleys—which of these
May call thee lord? I only know their portals;
My way of life leads me but rarely down
To bask by the huge hearths of those old halls,
Carousing with the vassals; but the paths
Which step from out our mountains to their doors,
I know from childhood—which of these is thine?

Man. No matter.

C. Hun. Well, sir, pardon me the question,
And be of better cheer. Come, taste my wine;
'Tis of an ancient vintage: many a day
'Tis thaw'd my veins among our glaciers, now
Let it do thus for thine.—Come pledge me fairly.

Man. Away, away! there's blood upon the brim!
Will it then never—never sink in the earth?

C. Hun. What dost thou mean? thy senses wander from thee.

Man. I say 'tis blood—my blood! the pure warm stream
Which ran in the veins of my fathers, and in ours
When we were in our youth, and had one heart,
And loved each other as we should not love,
And this was shed: but still it rises up,
Coloring the clouds that shut me out from heaven,
Where thou art not—and I shall never be.

C. Hun. Man of strange words, and some half-maddening sin,
Which makes thee people vacancy, whate'er
Thy dread and sufferance be, there's comfort yet—
The aid of holy men, and heavenly patience——

Man. Patience and patience! Hence—that word was made
For brutes of burden, not for birds of prey;

Preach it to mortals of a dust like thine—
I am not of thine order.
C. Hun. Thanks to Heaven!
I would not be of thine for the free fame
Of William Tell: but whatsoe'er thine ill,
It must be borne, and these wild starts are useless.
Man. Do I not bear it?—Look on me—I live.
C. Hun. This is convulsion, and no healthful life.
Man. I tell thee, man! I have lived many years,
Many long years, but they are nothing now
To those which I must number: ages—ages—
Space and eternity—and consciousness,
With the fierce thirst of death—and still unslaked!
C. Hun. Why, on thy brow the seal of middle age
Hath scarce been set; I am thine elder far.
Man. Think'st thou existence doth depend on time?
It doth; but actions are our epochs: mine
Have made my days and nights imperishable,
Endless, and all alike, as sands on the shore,
Innumerable atoms; and one desert,
Barren and cold, on which the wild waves break,
But nothing rests, save carcasses and wrecks,
Rocks, and the salt-surf weeds of bitterness.
C. Hun. Alas! he's mad—but yet I must not leave him.
Man. I would I were—for then the things I see
Would be but a distemper'd dream.
C. Hun. What is it
That thou dost see, or think thou look'st upon?
Man. Myself, and thee—a peasant of the Alps—
Thy humble virtues, hospitable home,
And spirit patient, pious, proud, and free;
Thy self-respect, grafted on innocent thoughts;
Thy days of health, and nights of sleep; thy toils,
By danger dignified, yet guiltless; hopes
Of cheerful old age and a quiet grave,
With cross and garland over its green turf,
And thy grandchildren's love for epitaph;
This do I see—And then I look within—
It matters not—my soul was scorch'd already!
C. Hun. And wouldst thou then exchange thy lot for mine?
Man. No, friend! I would not wrong thee, nor exchange
My lot with living being: I can bear—
However wretchedly, 'tis still to bear—
In life what others could not brook to dream,
But perish in their slumber.
C. Hun. And with this—
This cautious feeling for another's pain,
Canst thou be black with evil?—say not so.
Can one of gentle thoughts have wreak'd revenge
Upon his enemies?
Man. Oh! no, no, no!
My injuries came down on those who loved me—
On those whom I best loved: I never quell'd
An enemy, save in my just defence—
But my embrace was fatal!
C. Hun. Heaven give thee rest!

And penitence restore thee to thyself:
My prayers shall be for thee.
Man. I need them not,
But can endure thy pity. I depart—
'Tis time—farewell!—Here's gold and thanks for thee—
No words—it is thy due.—Follow me not,
I know my path—the mountain peril's past:—
And once again, I charge thee, follow not!

[*Exit* MANFRED.

SCENE II.

A lower Valley in the Alps.—A Cataract.

Enter MANFRED.

It is not noon—the sunbow's rays still arch *
The torrent with the many hues of heaven,
And roll the sheeted silver's waving column
O'er the crag's headlong perpendicular,
And fling its lines of foaming light along,
And to and fro, like the pale courser's tail,
The Giant steed, to be bestrode by Death,
As told in the Apocalypse. No eyes
But mine now drink this sight of loveliness;
I should be sole in this sweet solitude,
And with the Spirit of the place divide
The homage of these waters.—I will call her.

[MANFRED *takes some of the water into the palm of his hand, and flings it in the air, muttering the adjuration. After a pause, the* WITCH OF THE ALPS *rises beneath the arch of the sunbow of the torrent.*

Beautiful Spirit! with thy hair of light,
And dazzling eyes of glory, in whose form
The charms of earth's least mortal daughters grow
To an unearthly stature, in an essence
Of purer elements; while the hues of youth—
Carnation'd like a sleeping infant's cheek,
Rock'd by the beating of her mother's heart,
Or the rose tints, which summer's twilight leaves
Upon the lofty glacier's virgin snow,
The blush of earth, embracing with her heaven—
Tinge thy celestial aspect, and make tame
The beauties of the sunbow which bends o'er thee.
Beautiful Spirit! in thy calm clear brow,
Wherein is glass'd serenity of soul,
Which of itself shows immortality,
I read that thou wilt pardon to a Son
Of Earth, whom the abstruser powers permit
At times to commune with them—if that he
Avail him of his spells—to call thee thus,
And gaze on thee a moment.
Witch. Son of Earth!
I know thee, and the powers which give thee power;
I know thee for a man of many thoughts,

* This iris is formed by the rays of the sun over the lower part of the Alpine torrents: it is exactly like a rainbow come down to pay a visit, and so close that you may walk into it. This effect lasts till noon.

And deeds of good and ill, extreme in both,
Fatal and fated in thy sufferings.
I have expected this—what wouldst thou with me?
Man. To look upon thy beauty—nothing further.
The face of the earth hath madden'd me, and I
Take refuge in her mysteries, and pierce
To the abodes of those who govern her—
But they can nothing aid me. I have sought
From them what they could not bestow, and now
I search no further.
Witch. What could be the quest
Which is not in the power of the most powerful,
The rulers of the invisible?
Man. A boon;
But why should I repeat it? 'twere in vain.
Witch. I know not that; let thy lips utter it.
Man. Well, though it torture me, 'tis but the same;
My pang shall find a voice. From my youth upwards
My spirit walk'd not with the souls of men,
Nor look'd upon the earth with human eyes;
The thirst of their ambition was not mine,
The aim of their existence was not mine;
My joys, my griefs, my passions, and my powers,
Made me a stranger; though I wore the form,
I had no sympathy with breathing flesh,
Nor 'midst the creatures of clay that girded me
Was there but one, who——but of her anon.
I said, with men, and with the thoughts of men,
I held but slight communion; but instead,
My joy was in the Wilderness, to breathe
The difficult air of the iced mountain's top,
Where the birds dare not build, nor insect's wing
Flit o'er the herbless granite; or to plunge
Into the torrent, and to roll along
On the swift whirl of the new breaking wave
Of river-stream, or ocean, in their flow.
In these my early strength exulted; or
To follow through the night the moving moon,
The stars and their development; or catch
The dazzling lightnings till my eyes grew dim;
Or to look, list'ning, on the scatter'd leaves,
While Autumn winds were at their evening song.
These were my pastimes, and to be alone;
For if the beings, of whom I was one—
Hating to be so—cross'd me in my path,
I felt myself degraded back to them,
And was all clay again. And then I dived,
In my lone wanderings, to the caves of death,
Searching its cause in its effect; and drew
From wither'd bones, and skulls, and heap'd up dust,
Conclusions most forbidden. Then I pass'd
The nights of years in sciences untaught,
Save in the old time; and with time and toil,
And terrible ordeal, and such penance
As in itself hath power upon the air,
And spirits that do compass air and earth,

Space, and the peopled infinite, I made
Mine eyes familiar with Eternity,
Such as, before me, did the Magi, and
He who from out their fountain dwellings raised
Eros and Anteros,* at Gadara,
As I do thee;—and with my knowledge grew
The thirst of knowledge, and the power and joy
Of this most bright intelligence, until——
Witch. Proceed.
Man. Oh! I but thus prolong'd my words,
Boasting these idle attributes, because
As I approach the core of my heart's grief——
But to my task. I have not named to thee
Father or mother, mistress, friend, or being,
With whom I wore the chain of human ties;
If I had such, they seem'd not such to me—
Yet there was one——
Witch. Spare not thyself—proceed.
Man. She was like me in lineaments—her eyes,
Her hair, her features, all, to the very tone
Even of her voice, they said were like to mine;
But soften'd all, and temper'd into beauty:
She had the same lone thoughts and wanderings,
The quest of hidden knowledge, and a mind
To comprehend the universe: nor these
Alone, but with them gentler powers than mine,
Pity, and smiles, and tears—which I had not;
And tenderness—but that I had for her;
Humility—and that I never had.
Her faults were mine—her virtues were her own—
I loved her, and destroy'd her!
Witch. With thy hand?
Man. Not with my hand, but heart—which broke her heart—
It gazed on mine, and wither'd. I have shed
Blood, but not hers—and yet her blood was shed—
I saw—and could not stanch it.
Witch. And for this—
A being of the race thou dost despise,
The order which thine own would rise above,
Mingling with us and ours, thou dost forego
The gifts of our great knowledge, and shrink'st back
To recreant mortality——Away!
Man. Daughter of Air! I tell thee, since that hour—
But words are breath—look on me in my sleep,
Or watch my watchings—Come and sit by me!
My solitude is solitude no more,
But peopled with the Furies;—I have gnash'd
My teeth in darkness till returning morn,
Then cursed myself till sunset;—I have pray'd
For madness as a blessing—'tis denied me.
I have affronted death—but in the war
Of elements the waters shrunk from me,
And fatal things pass'd harmless—the cold hand
Of an all-pitiless demon held me back,

* The philosopher Jamblicus. The story of the raising of Eros and Anteros may be found in his Life by Eunapius. It is well told.

Back by a single hair, which would not break.
In fantasy, imagination, all
The affluence of my soul—which one day was
A Cœsus in creation—I plunged deep,
But, like an ebbing wave, it dash'd me back
Into the gulf of my unfathom'd thought.
I plunged amidst mankind—Forgetfulness
I sought in all, save where 'tis to be found,
And that I have to learn—my sciences,
My long pursued and superhuman art,
Is mortal here—I dwell in my despair—
And live—and live for ever.

Witch. It may be
That I can aid thee.

Man. To do this, thy power
Must wake the dead, or lay me low with them.
Do so—in any shape—in any hour—
With any torture—so it be the last.

Witch. That is not in my province; but if thou
Wilt swear obedience to my will, and do
My bidding, it may help thee to thy wishes.

Man. I will not swear—Obey! and whom? the spirits
Whose presence I command, and be the slave
Of those who served me—Never!

Witch. Is this all?
Hast thou no gentler answer?—Yet bethink thee,
And pause ere thou rejectest.

Man. I have said it.

Witch. Enough!—I may retire then—say!

Man. Retire!

[*The* WITCH *disappears.*

Man. (*alone.*) We are the fools of time and terror: days
Steal on us and steal from us; yet we live,
Loathing our life, and dreading still to die.
In all the days of this detested yoke—
This vital weight upon the struggling heart,
Which sinks with sorrow, or beats quick with pain,
Or joy that ends in agony or faintness—
In all the days of past and future, for
In life there is no present, we can number
How few—how less than few—wherein the soul
Forbears to pant for death, and yet draws back
As from a stream in winter, though the chill
Be but a moment's. I have one resource
Still in my science—I can call the dead,
And ask them what it is we dread to be:
The sternest answer can but be the Grave,
And that is nothing—if they answer not—
The buried Prophet answer'd to the Hag
Of Endor; and the Spartan Monarch drew
From the Byzantine maid's unsleeping spirit
An answer and his destiny—he slew
That which he loved, unknowing what he slew,
And died unpardon'd—though he call'd in aid
The Phyxian Jove, and in Phigalia roused
The Arcadian Evocators to compel

The indignant shadow to depose her wrath
Or fix her term of vengeance—she replied
In words of dubious import, but fulfill'd.*
If I had never lived, that which I love
Had still been living; had I never loved,
That which I love would still be beautiful—
Happy and giving happiness. What is she?
What is she now?—a sufferer for my sins—
A thing I dare not think upon—or nothing.
Within few hours I shall not call in vain—
Yet in this hour I dread the thing I dare:
Until this hour I never shrunk to gaze
On spirit, good or evil—now I tremble,
And feel a strange cold thaw upon my heart.
But I can act even what I most abhor,
And champion human fears.—The night approaches. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

The Summit of the Jungfrau Mountain.

Enter FIRST DESTINY.

The moon is rising broad, and round, and bright;
And here on snows, where never human foot
Of common mortal trod, we nightly tread,
And leave no traces; o'er the savage sea,
The glassy ocean of the mountain ice,
We skim its rugged breakers, which put on
The aspect of a tumbling tempest's foam,
Frozen in a moment—a dead whirlpool's image:
And this most steep fantastic pinnacle,
The fretwork of some earthquake—where the clouds
Pause to repose themselves in passing by—
Is sacred to our revels, or our vigils;
Here do I wait my sisters, on our way
To the Hall of Arimanes, for to-night
Is our great festival—'tis strange they come not.

A Voice without, singing.

The Captive Usurper,
Hurl'd down from the throne,
Lay buried in torpor,
Forgotten and lone;
I broke through his slumbers,
I shiver'd his chain,
I leagued him with numbers—
He's Tyrant again!
With the blood of a million he'll answer my care,
With a nation's destruction—his flight and despair.

Second Voice, without.

The ship sail'd on, the ship sail'd fast,
But I left not a sail, and I left not a mast;
There is not a plank of the hull or the deck,

* The story of Pausanias, king of Sparta (who commanded the Greeks at the battle of Platea, and afterwards perished for an attempt to betray the Lacedæmonians), and Cleonice, is told in Plutarch's Life of Cimon; and in the Laconics of Pansanias the sophist, in his description of Greece.

And there is not a wretch to lament o'er his wreck,
Save one, whom I held, as he swam, by the hair,
And he was a subject well worthy my care;
A traitor on land, and a pirate at sea—
But I saved him to wreak further havoc for me!

FIRST DESTINY, *answering.*

The city lies sleeping;
The morn, to deplore it,
May dawn on it weeping:
Sullenly, slowly,
The black plague flew o'er it—
Thousands lie lowly;
Tens of thousands shall perish—
The living shall fly from
The sick they shall cherish;
But nothing can vanquish
The touch that they die from.
Sorrow and anguish,
And evil and dread,
Envelop a nation—
The blest are the dead,
Who see not the sight
Of their own desolation—
This work of a night—
This wreck of a realm—this deed of my doing—
For ages I've done, and shall still be renewing!

Enter the SECOND *and* THIRD DESTINIES.

The Three.

Our hands contain the hearts of men,
Our footsteps are their graves;
We only give to take again
The spirits of our slaves!

First Des. Welcome!—Where 's Nemesis?
Second Des. At some great work;
But what, I know not, for my hands were full.
Third Des. Behold she cometh.

Enter NEMESIS.

First Des. Say, where hast thou been?
My sisters and thyself are slow to-night.
Nem. I was detain'd repairing shatter'd thrones,
Marrying fools, restoring dynasties,
Avenging men upon their enemies,
And making them repent their own revenge;
Goading the wise to madness; from the dull
Shaping out oracles to rule the world
Afresh, for they were waxing out of date,
And mortals dared to ponder for themselves,
To weigh kings in the balance, and to speak
Of freedom, the forbidden fruit.—Away!
We have outstay'd the hour—mount we our clouds!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

The Hall of Arimanes.—Arimanes on his Throne, a Globe of Fire, surrounded by the Spirits.

Hymn of the SPIRITS.

Hail to our Master!—Prince of Earth and Air!
Who walks the clouds and waters—in his hand
The sceptre of the elements, which tear
Themselves to chaos at his high command!
He breatheth—and a tempest shakes the sea;
He speaketh—and the clouds reply in thunder;
He gazeth—from his glance the sunbeams flee;
He moveth—earthquakes rend the world asunder.
Beneath his footsteps the volcanoes rise;
His shadow is the Pestilence; his path
The comets herald through the crackling skies;
And planets turn to ashes at his wrath.
To him War offers daily sacrifice;
To him Death pays his tribute; Life is his,
With all its infinite of agonies—
And his the spirit of whatever is!

Enter the DESTINIES *and* NEMESIS.

First Des. Glory to Arimanes! on the earth
His power increaseth—both my sisters did
His bidding, nor did I neglect my duty!
Second Des. Glory to Arimanes! we who bow
The necks of men, bow down before his throne!
Third Des. Glory to Arimanes! we await his nod!
Nem. Sovereign of Sovereigns! we are thine,
And all that liveth, more or less, is ours,
And most things wholly so; still to increase
Our power, increasing thine, demands our care,
And we are vigilant.—Thy late commands
Have been fulfill'd to the utmost.

Enter MANFRED.

A Spirit. What is here?
A mortal!—Thou most rash and fatal wretch,
Bow down and worship!
Second Spirit. I do know the man—
A Magian of great power, and fearful skill!
Third Spirit. Bow down and worship, slave!—What,
know'st thou not
Thine and our Sovereign?—Tremble, and obey!
All the Spirits. Prostrate thyself, and thy condemned clay
Child of the Earth! or dread the worst.
Man. I know it;
And yet ye see I kneel not.
Fourth Spirit. 'Twill be taught thee.
Man. 'Tis taught already;—many a night on the earth,
On the bare ground, have I bow'd down my face,
And strew'd my head with ashes; I have known
The fulness of humiliation, for
I sunk before my vain despair, and knelt
To my own desolation.

Fifth Spirit. Dost thou dare
Refuse to Arimanes on his throne
What the whole earth accords, beholding not
The terror of his Glory?—Crouch! I say.
Man. Bid *him* bow down to that which is above him,
The overruling Infinite—the Maker
Who made him not for worship—let him kneel,
And we will kneel together.
The Spirits. Crush the worm!
Tear him in pieces!—
First Des. Hence! Avaunt:—he's mine,
Prince of the Powers invisible! this man
Is of no common order, as his port
And presence here denote; his sufferings
Have been of an immortal nature, like
Our own; his knowledge, and his powers and will,
As far as is compatible with clay,
Which clogs the ethereal essence, have been such
As clay hath seldom borne; his aspirations
Have been beyond the dwellers of the earth,
And they have only taught him what we know—
That knowledge is not happiness, and science
But an exchange of ignorance for that
Which is another kind of ignorance.
This is not all—the passions, attributes
Of earth and heaven, from which no power, nor being,
Nor breath, from the worm upwards, is exempt,
Have pierced his heart; and in their consequence
Made him a thing, which I, who pity not,
Yet pardon those who pity. He is mine,
And thine, it may be—be it so, or not,
No other Spirit in this region hath
A soul like his—or power upon his soul.
Nem. What doth he here then?
First Des. Let him answer that.
Man. Ye know what I have known; and without power
I could not be amongst ye: but there are
Powers deeper still beyond—I come in quest
Of such, to answer unto what I seek.
Nem. What wouldst thou?
Man. Thou canst not reply to me.
Call up the dead—my question is for them.
Nem. Great Arimanes, doth thy will avouch
The wishes of this mortal?
Ari. Yea.
Nem. Whom wouldst thou
Uncharnel?
Man. One without a tomb—call up
Astarte.

NEMESIS.

Shadow! or Spirit!
Whatever thou art,
Which still doth inherit
The whole or a part
Of the form of thy birth,
Of the mould of thy clay,

Which return'd to the earth,
Re-appear to the day!
Bear what thou borest,
The heart and the form,
And the aspect thou worest
Redeem from the worm.
Appear!—Appear!—Appear!
Who sent thee there requires thee here.

[*The Phantom of* ASTARTE *rises and stands in the midst.*

Man. Can this be death? there's bloom upon her cheek;
But now I see it is no living hue,
But a strange hectic—like the unnatural red
Which Autumn plants upon the perish'd leaf.
It is the same! O God! that I should dread
To look upon the same—Astarte!—No,
I cannot speak to her—but bid her speak—
Forgive me or condemn me.

NEMESIS.

By the power which hath broken
The grave which enthrall'd thee,
Speak to him who hath spoken,
Or those who have call'd thee.

Man. She is silent,
And in that silence I am more than answer'd.

Nem. My power extends no further. Prince of Air!
It rests with thee alone—command her voice.

Ari. Spirit—obey this sceptre!

Nem. Silent still!
She is not of our order, but belongs
To the other powers. Mortal! thy quest is vain,
And we are baffled also.

Man. Hear me, hear me—
Astarte!—my beloved! speak to me:
I have so much endured—so much endure—
Look on me! the grave hath not changed thee more
Than I am changed for thee. Thou lovedst me
Too much, as I loved thee: we were not made
To torture thus each other, though it were
The deadliest sin to love as we have loved.
Say that thou loath'st me not—that I do bear
This punishment for both—that thou wilt be
One of the blessed—and that I shall die;
For hitherto all hateful things conspire
To bind me in existence—in a life
Which makes me shrink from immortality—
A future like the past. I cannot rest.
I know not what I ask, nor what I seek:
I feel but what thou art—and what I am;
And I would hear yet once before I perish
The voice which was my music—Speak to me!
For I have call'd on thee in the still night,
Startled the slumbering birds from the hush'd boughs,
And woke the mountain wolves, and made the caves
Acquainted with thy vainly echo'd name,
Which answer'd me—many things answer'd me—

Spirits and men—but thou wert silent all.
Yet speak to me! I have outwatch'd the stars,
And gazed o'er heaven in vain in search of thee.
Speak to me! I have wander'd o'er the earth,
And never found thy likeness.—Speak to me!
Look on the fiends around—they feel for me:
I fear them not, and feel for thee alone—
Speak to me! though it be in wrath;—but say—
I reck not what—but let me hear thee once—
This once—once more!

Phantom of Astarte. Manfred!

Man. Say on, say on—
I live but in the sound—it is thy voice!

Phan. Manfred! To-morrow ends thine earthly ills.
Farewell!

Man. Yet one word more—am I forgiven?

Phan. Farewell!

Man. Say, shall we meet again?

Phan. Farewell!

Man. One word for mercy! Say, thou lovest me.

Phan. Manfred! [*The Spirit of* ASTARTE *disappears.*

Nem. She's gone, and will not be recall'd;
Her words will be fulfill'd. Return to the earth.

A Spirit. He is convulsed—This is to be a mortal,
And seek the things beyond mortality.

Another Spirit. Yet, see, he mastereth himself, and makes
His torture tributary to his will.
Had he been one of us, he would have made
An awful spirit.

Nem. Hast thou further question
Of our great sovereign, or his worshippers?

Man. None.

Nem. Then for a time farewell.

Man. We meet then! Where? On the earth?—
Even as thou wilt: and for the grace accorded
I now depart a debtor. Fare ye well!

[*Exit* MANFRED.

(*Scene closes.*)

ACT III.

SCENE I.

A Hall in the Castle of Manfred.—MANFRED *and* HERMAN.

Man. What is the hour?

Her. It wants but one till sunset,
And promises a lovely twilight.

Man. Say,
Are all things so disposed of in the tower
As I directed?

Her. All, my lord, are ready:
Here is the key and casket.

Man. It is well:
Thou may'st retire. [*Exit* HERMAN.

Man. (*alone.*) There is a calm upon me—
Inexplicable stillness! which till now
Did not belong to what I knew of life.
If that I did not know philosophy
To be of all our vanities the motliest,
The merest word that ever fool'd the ear
From out the schoolman's jargon, I should deem
The golden secret, the sought "Kalon," found,
And seated in my soul. It will not last,
But it is well to have known it, though but once:
It hath enlarged my thoughts with a new sense,
And I within my tablets would note down
That there is such a feeling. Who is there?

Re-enter HERMAN.

Her. My lord, the Abbot of St. Maurice craves
To greet your presence.

Enter the ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE.

Abbot. Peace be with Count Manfred!

Man. Thanks, holy father! welcome to these walls;
Thy presence honors them, and blesseth those
Who dwell within them.

Abbot. Would it were so, Count!—
But I would fain confer with thee alone.

Man. Herman, retire.—What would my reverend guest?

Abbot. Thus, without prelude:—Age and zeal, my office,
And good intent, must plead my privilege;
Our near, though not acquainted neighborhood,
May also be my herald. Rumors strange,
And of unholy nature, are abroad,
And busy with thy name; a noble name
For centuries: may he who bears it now
Transmit it unimpair'd!

Man. Proceed—I listen.

Abbot. 'Tis said thou holdest converse with the things
Which are forbidden to the search of man;
That with the dwellers of the dark abodes,
The many evil and unheavenly spirits
Which walk the valley of the shade of death,
Thou communest. I know that with mankind,
Thy fellows in creation, thou dost rarely
Exchange thy thoughts, and that thy solitude
Is as an anchorite's, were it but holy.

Man. And what are they who do avouch these things?

Abbot. My pious brethren—the scared peasantry—
Even thy own vassals—who do look on thee
With most unquiet eyes. Thy life's in peril.

Man. Take it.

Abbot. I come to save, and not destroy—
I would not pry into thy secret soul;
But if these things be sooth, there still is time
For penitence and pity: reconcile thee
With the true church, and through the church to Heaven.

Man. I hear thee. This is my reply: Whate'er
I may have been, or am, doth rest between
Heaven and myself.—I shall not choose a mortal

To be my mediator. Have I sinn'd
Against your ordinances? prove and punish!
Abbot. My son! I did not speak of punishment,
But penitence and pardon;—with thyself
The choice of such remains—and for the last,
Our institutions and our strong belief
Have given me power to smooth the path from sin
To higher hope and better thoughts; the first
I leave to Heaven—"Vengeance is Mine alone!"
So saith the Lord, and with all humbleness
His servant echoes back the awful word.
Man. Old man! there is no power in holy men,
Nor charm in prayer—nor purifying form
Of penitence—nor outward look—nor fast—
Nor agony—nor, greater than all these,
The inmate tortures of that deep despair,
Which is remorse without the fear of hell,
But all in all sufficient to itself
Would make a hell of heaven—can exorcise
From out the unbounded spirit, the quick sense
Of its own sins, wrongs, sufferance, and revenge
Upon itself; there is no future pang
Can deal that justice on the self-condemn'd
He deals on his own soul.
Abbot. All this is well;
For this will pass away, and be succeeded
By an auspicious hope, which shall look up
With calm assurance to that blessed place,
Which all who seek may win, whatever be
Their earthly errors, so they be atoned:
And the commencement of atonement is
The sense of its necessity.—Say on—
And all our church can teach thee shall be taught;
And all we can absolve thee shall be pardon'd.
Man. When Rome's sixth emperor was near his last,
The victim of a self-inflicted wound,
To shun the torments of a public death
From senates once his slaves, a certain soldier,
With show of loyal pity, would have stanch'd
The gushing throat with his officious robe;
The dying Roman thrust him back, and said—
Some empire still in his expiring glance—
"It is too late—is this fidelity?"
Abbot. And what of this?
Man. I answer with the Roman—
"It is too late!"
Abbot. It never can be so,
To reconcile thyself with thy own soul,
And thy own soul with Heaven. Hast thou no hope?
'Tis strange—even those who do despair above,
Yet shape themselves some fantasy on earth,
To which frail twig they cling, like drowning men.
Man. Ay—father! I have had those earthly visions
And noble aspirations in my youth,
To make my own the mind of other men,
The enlightener of nations; and to rise

I knew not whither—it might be to fall;
But fall, even as the mountain-cataract,
Which having leapt from its more dazzling height,
Even in the foaming strength of its abyss,
(Which casts up misty columns that become
Clouds raining from the re-ascended skies,)
Lies low but mighty still.—But this is past,
My thoughts mistook themselves.

Abbot. And wherefore so?

Man. I could not tame my nature down; for he
Must serve who fain would sway—and soothe—and sue—
And watch all time—and pry into all place—
And be a living lie—who would become
A mighty thing amongst the mean, and such
The mass are; I disdain'd to mingle with
A herd, though to be leader—and of wolves.
The lion is alone, and so am I.

Abbot. And why not live and act with other men?

Man. Because my nature was averse from life;
And yet not cruel; for I would not make,
But find a desolation:—like the wind,
The red-hot breath of the most lone simoom,
Which dwells but in the desert, and sweeps o'er
The barren sands which bear no shrubs to blast,
And revels o'er their wild and arid waves,
And seeketh not, so that it is not sought,
But being met is deadly; such hath been
The course of my existence; but there came
Things in my path which are no more.

Abbot. Alas!
I 'gin to fear that thou art past all aid
From me and from my calling; yet so young,
I still would——

Man. Look on me! there is an order
Of mortals on the earth, who do become
Old in their youth, and die ere middle age,
Without the violence of warlike death;
Some perishing of pleasure—some of study—
Some worn with toil—some of mere weariness—
Some of disease—and some insanity—
And some of wither'd, or of broken hearts;
For this last is a malady which slays
More than are number'd in the lists of Fate,
Taking all shapes, and bearing many names.
Look upon me! for even of all these things
Have I partaken; and of all these things,
One were enough; then wonder not that I
Am what I am, but that I ever was,
Or having been, that I am still on earth.

Abbot. Yet, hear me still——

Man. Old man! I do respect
Thine order, and revere thy years; I deem
Thy purpose pious, but it is in vain!
Think me not churlish; I would spare thyself,
Far more than me, in shunning at this time
All further colloquy—and so—farewell. [*Exit* MANFRED

Abbot. This should have been a noble creature: he
Hath all the energy which would have made
A goodly frame of glorious elements,
Had they been wisely mingled; as it is,
It is an awful chaos—light and darkness—
And mind and dust—and passions and pure thoughts,
Mix'd, and contending without end or order,
All dormant or destructive: he will perish,
And yet he must not; I will try once more,
For such are worth redemption; and my duty
Is to dare all things for a righteous end.
I'll follow him—but cautiously, though surely.

[*Exit* ABBOT.

SCENE II.

Another Chamber.—MANFRED *and* HERMAN.

Her. My lord, you bade me wait on you at sunset:
He sinks behind the mountain.

Man. Doth he so?
I will look on him.

[MANFRED *advances to the Window of the Hall.*

Glorious Orb! the idol
Of early nature, and the vigorous race
Of undiseased mankind, the giant sons *
Of the embrace of angels, with a sex
More beautiful than they, which did draw down
The erring spirits, who can ne'er return.—
Most glorious orb! that wert a worship, ere
The mystery of thy making was reveal'd!
Thou earliest minister of the Almighty,
Which gladden'd, on their mountain tops, the hearts
Of the Chaldean shepherds, till they pour'd
Themselves in orisons! Thou material God!
And representative of the Unknown—
Who chose thee for his shadow! Thou chief star!
Centre of many stars! which mak'st our earth
Endurable, and temperest the hues
And hearts of all who walk within thy rays!
Sire of the seasons! Monarch of the climes,
And those who dwell in them! for near or far,
Our inborn spirits have a tint of thee,
Even as our outward aspects;—thou dost rise,
And shine, and set in glory. Fare thee well!
I ne'er shall see thee more. As my first glance
Of love and wonder was for thee, then take
My latest look: thou wilt not beam on one
To whom the gifts of life and warmth have been
Of a more fatal nature. He is gone:
I follow.

[*Exit* MANFRED.

* "And it came to pass, that the *sons of God* saw the daughters of men that they were fair," &c.—"There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the *sons of God* came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown."—*Genesis*, vi. 2, 4.

SCENE III.

The Mountains—The Castle of Manfred at some distance—A Terrace before a Tower.—Time, Twilight.—HERMAN, MANUEL, *and other Dependants of* MANFRED.

Her. 'Tis strange enough: night after night, for years,
He hath pursued long vigils in this tower,
Without a witness. I have been within it—
So have we all been oft-times: but from it,
Or its contents, it were impossible
To draw conclusions absolute, of aught
His studies tend to. To be sure, there is
One chamber where none enter: I would give
The fee of what I have to come these three years,
To pore upon its mysteries.
Manuel. 'Twere dangerous;
Content thyself with what thou know'st already.
Her. Ah, Manuel! thou art elderly and wise,
And couldst say much; thou hast dwelt within the castle—
How many years is't?
Manuel. Ere Count Manfred's birth,
I served his father, whom he nought resembles.
Her. There be more sons in like predicament.
But wherein do they differ?
Manuel. I speak not
Of features or of form, but mind and habits;
Count Sigismund was proud—but gay and free—
A warrior and a reveller; he dwelt not
With books and solitude, nor made the night
A gloomy vigil, but a festal time,
Merrier than day; he did not walk the rocks
And forests like a wolf, nor turn aside
From men and their delights.
Her. Beshrew the hour,
But those were jocund times! I would that such
Would visit the old walls again; they look
As if they had forgotten them.
Manuel. These walls
Must change their chieftain first. Oh! I have seen
Some strange things in them, Herman.
Her. Come, be friendly;
Relate me some to while away our watch:
I've heard thee darkly speak of an event
Which happen'd hereabouts, by this same tower.
Manuel. That was a night indeed! I do remember
'Twas twilight, as it may be now, and such
Another evening;—yon red cloud, which rests
On Eigher's pinnacle, so rested then—
So like that it might be the same; the wind
Was faint and gusty, and the mountain snows
Began to glitter with the climbing moon;
Count Manfred was, as now, within his tower—
How occupied, we knew not, but with him
The sole companion of his wanderings
And watchings—her, whom of all earthly things
That lived, the only thing he seem'd to love—

As he, indeed, by blood was bound to do—
The Lady Astarte, his——
Hush! who comes here?

Enter the ABBOT.

Abbot. Where is your master?
Her. Yonder, in the tower.
Abbot. I must speak with him.
Manuel. 'Tis impossible;
He is most private, and must not be thus
Intruded on.
Abbot. Upon myself I take
The forfeit of my fault, if fault there be—
But I must see him.
Her. Thou hast seen him once
This eve already.
Abbot. Herman! I command thee,
Knock, and apprise the Count of my approach.
Her. We dare not.
Abbot. Then it seems I must be herald
Of my own purpose.
Manuel. Reverend father, stop—
I pray you pause.
Abbot. Why so?
Manuel. But step this way,
And I will tell you further. [*Exeunt*

SCENE IV.

Interior of the Tower.—MANFRED *alone.*

The stars are forth, the moon above the tops
Of the snow-shining mountains.—Beautiful!
I linger yet with Nature, for the night
Hath been to me a more familiar face
Than that of man; and in her starry shade
Of dim and solitary loveliness,
I learn'd the language of another world.
I do remember me, that in my youth,
When I was wandering—upon such a night
I stood within the Coliseum's wall,
'Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome;
The trees which grew along the broken arches
Waved dark in the blue midnight, and the stars
Shone through the rents of ruin; from afar
The watch-dog bay'd beyond the Tiber: and
More near from out the Cæsars' palace came
The owl's long cry, and, interruptedly,
Of distant sentinels the fitful song
Begun and died upon the gentle wind.
Some cypresses beyond the time-worn breach
Appear'd to skirt the horizon, yet they stood
Within a bowshot—where the Cæsars dwelt,
And dwell the tuneless birds of night, amidst
A grove which springs through levell'd battlements,
And twines its roots with the imperial hearths,
Ivy usurps the laurel's place of growth;—

But the gladiators' bloody Circus stands,
A noble wreck in ruinous perfection!
While Cæsar's chambers, and the Augustan halls,
Grovel on earth in indistinct decay.—
And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon, upon
All this, and cast a wide and tender light,
Which soften'd down the hoar austerity
Of rugged desolation, and fill'd up,
As 'twere anew, the gaps of centuries;
Leaving that beautiful which still was so,
And making that which was not, till the place
Became religion, and the heart ran o'er
With silent worship of the great of old!—
The dead, but sceptred sovereigns, who still rule
Our spirits from their urns.—
'Twas such a night!
'Tis strange that I recall it at this time;
But I have found our thoughts take wildest flight
Even at the moment when they should array
Themselves in pensive order.

Enter the ABBOT.

Abbot. My good lord!
I crave a second grace for this approach;
But yet let not my humble zeal offend
By its abruptness—all it hath of ill
Recoils on me; its good in the effect
May light upon your head—could I say *heart*—
Could I touch *that*, with words or prayers, I should
Recall a noble spirit which hath wander'd,
But is not yet all lost.
Man. Thou know'st me not!
My days are number'd, and my deeds recorded:
Retire, or 'twill be dangerous—Away!
Abbot. Thou dost not mean to menace me?
Man. Not I;
I simply tell thee peril is at hand,
And would preserve thee.
Abbot. What dost mean?
Man. Look there!
What dost thou see?
Abbot. Nothing.
Man. Look there, I say,
And steadfastly;—now tell me what thou seest.
Abbot. That which should shake me,—but I fear it not—
I see a dusk and awful figure rise,
Like an infernal god, from out the earth;
His face wrapt in a mantle, and his form
Robed as with angry clouds; he stands between
Thyself and me—but I do fear him not.
Man. Thou hast no cause—he shall not harm thee—but
His sight may shock thine old limbs into palsy.
I say to thee—Retire!
Abbot. And I reply—
Never—till I have battled with this fiend:—
What doth he here?—

Man. Why—ay—what doth he here?—
I did not send for him—he is unbidden.
Abbot. Alas! lost mortal! what with guests like these
Hast thou to do? I tremble for thy sake:
Why doth he gaze on thee, and thou on him?
Ah! he unveils his aspect: on his brow
The thunder-scars are graven; from his eye
Glares forth the immortality of hell—
Avaunt!—
Man. Pronounce—what is thy mission?
Spirit. Come!
Abbot. What art thou, unknown being? answer!—speak!
Spirit. The genius of this mortal.—Come! 'tis time.
Man. I am prepared for all things, but deny
The power which summons me. Who sent thee here?
Spirit. Thou'lt know anon—Come! come!
Man. I have commanded
Things of an essence greater far than thine,
And striven with thy masters. Get thee hence!
Spirit. Mortal! thine hour is come—Away! I say.
Man. I knew, and know my hour is come, but not
To render up my soul to such as thee:
Away! I'll die as I have lived—alone.
Spirit. Then I must summon up my brethren.—Rise!
[*Other Spirits rise up.*
Abbot. Avaunt! ye evil ones!—Avaunt! I say—
Ye have no power where piety hath power,
And I do charge ye in the name——
Spirit. Old man!
We know ourselves, our mission, and thine order;
Waste not thy holy words on idle uses,
It were in vain: this man is forfeited.
Once more I summon him—Away! away!
Man. I do defy ye—though I feel my soul
Is ebbing from me, yet I do defy ye;
Nor will I hence, while I have earthly breath
To breathe my scorn upon ye—earthly strength
To wrestle, though with spirits; what ye take
Shall be ta'en limb by limb.
Spirit. Reluctant mortal!
Is this the Magian who would so pervade
The world invisible, and make himself
Almost our equal?—Can it be that thou
Art thus in love with life? the very life
Which made thee wretched!
Man. Thou false fiend, thou liest!
My life is in its last hour; *that* I know,
Nor would redeem a moment of that hour.
I do not combat against death, but thee
And thy surrounding angels; my past power
Was purchased by no compact with thy crew,
But by superior science—penance—daring—
And length of watching—strength of mind—and skill
In knowledge of our fathers—when the earth
Saw men and spirits walking side by side,
And gave ye no supremacy: I stand

Upon my strength—I do defy—deny—
Spurn back—and scorn ye!—
Spirit. But thy many crimes
Have made thee——
Man. What are they to such as thee?
Must crimes be punish'd but by other crimes,
And greater criminals!—Back to thy hell!
Thou hast no power upon me, *that* I feel;
Thou never shalt possess me, *that* I know:
What I have done is done; I bear within
A torture which could nothing gain from thine:
The mind which is immortal makes itself
Requital for its good or evil thoughts—
Is its own origin of ill and end—
And its own place and time—its innate sense,
When stripp'd of this mortality, derives
No color from the fleeting things without;
But is absorb'd in sufferance or in joy,
Born from the knowledge of its own desert.
Thou didst not tempt me, and thou couldst not tempt me;
I have not been thy dupe, nor am thy prey—
But was my own destroyer, and will be
My own hereafter.—Back, ye baffled fiends!
The hand of death is on me—but not yours!

[*The Demons disappear.*

Abbot. Alas! how pale thou art—thy lips are white;
And thy breast heaves—and in thy gasping throat
The accents rattle—Give thy prayers to Heaven—
Pray—albeit but in thought—but die not thus.
Man. 'Tis over—my dull eyes can fix thee not;
But all things swim around me, and the earth
Heaves as it were beneath me. Fare thee well—
Give me thy hand.
Abbot. Cold—cold—even to the heart—
But yet one prayer—Alas! how fares it with thee?
Man. Old man! 'tis not so difficult to die.

[MANFRED *expires.*

Abbot. He 's gone—his soul hath ta'en his earthless flight—
Whither? I dread to think—but he is gone.

HEAVEN AND EARTH:

A MYSTERY,

FOUNDED ON THE FOLLOWING PASSAGE IN GENESIS, CHAP. VI.

"And it came to pass . . . . that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose."

"And woman wailing for her demon lover."—COLERIDGE.

Dramatis Personæ.

ANGELS.

SAMIASA.
AZAZIEL.
RAPHAEL, the Archangel.

MEN.

NOAH and his SONS—
IRAD.
JAPHET.

WOMEN.

ANAH.
AHOLIBAMAH.

Chorus of Spirits of the Earth.—Chorus of Mortals.

HEAVEN AND EARTH.

PART I.

SCENE I.

A woody and mountainous district near Mount Ararat.—Time, Midnight.

Enter ANAH *and* AHOLIBAMAH.

Anah. Our father sleeps: it is the hour when they
Who love us are accustom'd to descend
Through the deep clouds o'er rocky Ararat:
How my heart beats!
Aho. Let us proceed upon
Our invocation.
Anah. But the stars are hidden.
I tremble.
Aho. So do I, but not with fear
Of aught save their delay.
Anah. My sister, though
I love Azaziel more than——oh, too much!—
What was I going to say? my heart grows impious.
Aho. And where is the impiety of loving
Celestial natures?
Anah. But, Aholibamah,
I love our God less since His angel loved me:
This cannot be of good; and though I know not
That I do wrong, I feel a thousand fears
Which are not ominous of right.
Aho. Then wed thee
Unto some son of clay, and toil and spin!
There 's Japhet loves thee well, hath loved thee long.
Marry, and bring forth dust!
Anah. I should have loved
Azaziel not less, were he mortal; yet
I am glad he is not. I can not outlive him.
And when I think that his immortal wings
Will one day hover o'er the sepulchre
Of the poor child of clay which so adored him,
As he adores the Highest, death becomes
Less terrible: but yet I pity him;
His grief will be of ages, or at least
Mine would be such for him, were I the Seraph,
And he the perishable.

Aho. Rather say,
That he will single forth some other daughter
Of Earth, and love her as he once loved Anah.
Anah. And if it should be so, and she loved him,
Better thus than that he should weep for me.
Aho. If I thought thus of Samiasa's love,
All Seraph as he is, I'd spurn him from me.—
But to our invocation! 'Tis the hour.

Anah. Seraph!
From thy sphere!
Whatever star contain thy glory;
In the eternal depths of heaven
Albeit thou watchest with "the seven,"*
Though through space infinite and hoary
Before thy bright wings worlds be driven,
Yet hear!
Oh! think of her who holds thee dear!
And though she nothing is to thee,
Yet think that thou art all to her.
Thou canst not tell—and never be
Such pangs decreed to aught save me—
The bitterness of tears.
Eternity is in thy years,
Unborn, undying beauty in thine eyes;
With me thou canst not sympathize,
Except in love, and there thou must
Acknowledge that more loving dust
Ne'er wept beneath the skies.
Thou walk'st thy many worlds, thou seest
The face of Him who made thee great,
As He hath made me of the least
Of those cast out from Eden's gate:
Yet, Seraph dear!
Oh, hear!
For thou hast loved me, and I would not die
Until I know what I must die in knowing,
That thou forgett'st in thine eternity
Her whose heart death could not keep from o'erflowing
For thee, immortal essence as thou art!
Great is their love who love in sin and fear;
And such, I feel, are waging in my heart
A war unworthy; to an Adamite
Forgive, my Seraph! that such thoughts appear
For sorrow is our element;
Delight
An Eden kept afar from sight,
Though sometimes with our visions blent.
The hour is near
Which tells me we are not abandon'd quite—
Appear! appear!
Seraph!
My own Azaziel! be but here,
And leave the stars to their own light.

* The archangels, said to be seven in number, and to occupy the eighth rank in the celestial hierarchy.

Aho. Samiasa!
Wheresoe'er
Thou rulest in the upper air—
Or warring with the spirits who may dare
Dispute with Him
Who made all empires, empire; or recalling
Some wandering star, which shoots through the abyss,
Whose tenants dying, while their world is falling,
Share the dim destiny of clay in this;
Or joining with the inferior cherubim,
Thou deignest to partake their hymn—
Samiasa!
I call thee, I await thee, and I love thee.
Many may worship thee, that will I not:
If that thy spirit down to mine may move thee,
Descend and share my lot!
Though I be form'd of clay,
And thou of beams
More bright than those of day
On Eden's streams,
Thine immortality can not repay
With love more warm than mine,
My love. There is a ray
In me, which, though forbidden yet to shine,
I feel was lighted at thy God's and thine.
It may be hidden long: death and decay
Our mother Eve bequeath'd us—but my heart
Defies it; though this life must pass away,
Is *that* a cause for thee and me to part?
Thou art immortal—so am I: I feel—
I feel my immortality o'ersweep
All pains, all tears, all time, all fears, and peal,
Like the eternal thunders of the deep,
Into my ears this truth—"Thou liv'st for ever!"
But if it be in joy
I know not, nor would know;
That secret rests with the Almighty Giver,
Who folds in clouds the fonts of bliss and woe.
But thee and me He never can destroy:
Change us He may, but not o'erwhelm; we are
Of as eternal essence, and must war
With Him if He will war with us: with *thee*
I can share all things, even immortal sorrow;
For thou hast ventured to share life with *me*,
And shall *I* shrink from thine eternity!
No! though the serpent's sting should pierce me through,
And thou thyself wert like the serpent, coil
Around me still! and I will smile,
And curse thee not; but hold
Thee in as warm a fold
As——But descend, and prove
A mortal's love
For an immortal. If the skies contain
More joy than thou canst give and take, remain!
Anah. Sister! sister! I view them winging
Their bright way through the parted night,

Aho. The clouds from off their pinions flinging,
As though they bore to-morrow's light.
Anah. But if our father see the sight!
Aho. He would but deem it was the moon
Rising unto some sorcerer's tune
An hour too soon.
Anah. They come! *he* comes!—Azaziel!
Aho. Haste
To meet them! Oh for wings to bear
My spirit, while they hover there,
To Samiasa's breast!
Anah. Lo! they have kindled all the west,
Like a returning sunset;—lo!
On Ararat's late secret crest
A mild and many-color'd bow,
The remnant of their flashing path,
Now shines! and now, behold! it hath
Return'd to night, as rippling foam,
Which the leviathan hath lash'd
From his unfathomable home,
When sporting on the face of the calm deep,
Subsides soon after he again hath dash'd
Down, down, to where the ocean's fountains sleep.
Aho. They have touch'd earth!—Samiasa!
Anah. My Azaziel!
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter IRAD *and* JAPHET.

Irad. Despond not: wherefore wilt thou wander thus
To add thy silence to the silent night,
And lift thy tearful eye unto the stars?
They cannot aid thee.
Japh. But they soothe me—now
Perhaps she looks upon them as I look.
Methinks a being that is beautiful
Becometh more so as it looks on beauty,
The eternal beauty of undying things,
O Anah!
Irad. But she loves thee not.
Japh. Alas!
Irad. And proud Aholibamah spurns me also.
Japh. I feel for thee too.
Irad. Let her keep her pride,
Mine hath enabled me to bear her scorn:
It may be, time too will avenge it.
Japh. Canst thou
Find joy in such a thought?
Irad. Nor joy, nor sorrow.
I loved her well; I would have loved her better,
Had love been met with love; as 'tis, I leave her
To brighter destinies, if so she deems them.
Japh. What destinies?
Irad. I have some cause to think
She loves another.
Japh. Anah?

Irad. No; her sister.
Japh. What other?
Irad. That I know not; but her air,
If not her words, tells me she loves another.
Japh. Ay, but not Anah; she but loves her God.
Irad. Whate'er she loveth, so she loves thee not,
What can it profit thee?
Japh. True, nothing; but
I love.
Irad. And so did I.
Japh. And now thou lov'st not,
Or think'st thou lov'st not, art thou happier?
Irad. Yes.
Japh. I pity thee.
Irad. Me! why?
Japh. For being happy,
Deprived of that which makes my misery.
Irad. I take thy taunt as part of thy distemper,
And would not feel as thou dost for more shekels
Than all our father's herds would bring if weigh'd
Against the metal of the sons of Cain—
The yellow dust they try to barter with us,
As if such useless and discolor'd trash,
The refuse of the earth, could be received
For milk, and wool, and flesh, and fruits, and all
Our flocks and wilderness afford.—Go, Japhet,
Sigh to the stars, as wolves howl to the moon—
I must back to my rest.
Japh. And so would I,
If I could rest.
Irad. Thou wilt not to our tents then?
Japh. No, Irad; I will to the cavern, whose
Mouth, they say, opens from the internal world,
To let the inner spirits of the earth
Forth when they walk its surface.
Irad. Wherefore so!
What wouldst thou there?
Japh. Soothe further my sad spirit
With gloom as sad: it is a hopeless spot,
And I am hopeless.
Irad. But 'tis dangerous;
Strange sounds and sights have peopled it with terrors.
I must go with thee.
Japh. Irad, no; believe me
I feel no evil thought, and fear no evil.
Irad. But evil things will be thy foe the more,
As not being of them: turn thy steps aside,
Or let mine be with thine.
Japh. No; neither, Irad:
I must proceed alone.
Irad. Then peace be with thee!
[*Exit* IRAD.
Japh. (*solus.*) Peace! I have sought it where it should be found,
In love—with love, too, which perhaps deserved it;
And, in its stead, a heaviness of heart—

A weakness of the spirit—listless days,
And nights inexorable to sweet sleep—
Have come upon me. Peace! what peace? the calm
Of desolation, and the stillness of
The untrodden forest, only broken by
The sweeping tempest through its groaning boughs;
Such is the sullen or the fitful state
Of my mind overworn. The earth 's grown wicked,
And many signs and portents have proclaim'd
A change at hand, and an o'erwhelming doom
To perishable beings. Oh, my Anah!
When the dread hour denounced shall open wide
The fountains of the deep, how mightest thou
Have lain within this bosom, folded from
The elements—this bosom, which in vain
Hath beat for thee, and then will beat more vainly,
While thine———O God! at least remit to her
Thy wrath! for she is pure amidst the failing
As a star in the clouds, which cannot quench,
Although they obscure it for an hour. My Anah!
How would I have adored thee, but thou wouldst not;
And still would I redeem thee—see thee live
When Ocean is Earth's grave, and, unopposed
By rock or shallow, the leviathan,
Lord of the shorcless sea and watery world,
Shall wonder at his boundlessness of realm.

[*Exit* JAPHET.

Enter NOAH *and* SHEM.

Noah. Where is thy brother Japhet?

Shem. He went forth,
According to his wont, to meet with Irad,
He said; but, as I fear, to bend his steps
Towards Anah's tents, round which he hovers nightly,
Like a dove round and round its pillaged nest;
Or else he walks the wild up to the cavern
Which opens to the heart of Ararat.

Noah. What doth he there? It is an evil spot
Upon an earth all evil: for things worse
Than even wicked men resort there: he
Still loves this daughter of a fated race,
Although he could not wed her if she loved him,
And that she doth not. Oh, the unhappy hearts
Of men! that one of my blood, knowing well
The destiny and evil of these days,
And that the hour approacheth, should indulge
In such forbidden yearnings! Lead the way;
He must be sought for!

Shem. Go not forward, father;
I will seek Japhet.

Noah. Do not fear for me:
All evil things are powerless on the man
Selected by Jehovah.—Let us on.

Shem. To the tents of the father of the sisters?

Noah. No; to the cavern of the Caucasus.

[*Exeunt* NOAH *and* SHEM.

SCENE III.

The mountains.—A cavern, and the rocks of Caucasus.

Japh. (*solus.*) Ye wilds, that look eternal! and thou cave,
Which seem'st unfathomable! and ye mountains,
So varied and so terrible in beauty!
Here, in your rugged majesty of rocks,
And toppling trees that twine their roots with stone
In perpendicular places, where the foot
Of man would tremble, could he reach them—yes,
Ye look eternal! Yet, in a few days,
Perhaps even hours, ye will be changed, rent, hurl'd
Before the mass of waters; and yon cave,
Which seems to lead into a lower world,
Shall have its depth search'd by the sweeping wave,
And dolphins gambol in the lion's den:
And man——Oh, men! my fellow-beings! who
Shall weep above your universal grave,
Save I? Who shall be left to weep?—My kinsmen,
Alas! what am I better than ye are,
That I must live beyond ye? Where shall be
The pleasant places where I thought of Anah
While I had hope; or the more savage haunts,
Scarce less beloved, where I despair'd for her!
And can it be!—Shall yon exulting peak,
Whose glittering top is like a distant star,
Lie low beneath the boiling of the deep?
No more to have the morning sun break forth,
And scatter back the mists in floating folds
From its tremendous brow? no more to have
Day's broad orb drop behind its head at even,
Leaving it with a crown of many hues?
No more to be the beacon of the world,
For angels to alight on, as the spot
Nearest the stars? And can those words "*no more*"
Be meant for thee, for all things, save for us,
And the predestined creeping things reserved
By my sire to Jehovah's bidding? May
He preserve *them*, and *I not* have the power
To snatch the loveliest of earth's daughters from
A doom which even some serpent, with his mate,
Shall 'scape, to save his kind to be prolong'd,
To hiss and sting through some emerging world,
Reeking and dank from out the slime, whose ooze
Shall slumber o'er the wreck of this, until
The salt morass subside into a sphere
Beneath the sun, and be the monument,
The sole and undistinguish'd sepulchre,
Of yet quick myriads of all life? How much
Breath will be still'd at once! All-beauteous world!
So young, so mark'd out for destruction, I
With a cleft heart look on thee day by day,
And night by night, thy number'd days and nights:
I cannot save thee, cannot save even her
Whose love had made me love thee more; but, as
A portion of thy dust, I cannot think

Upon thy coming doom without a feeling
Such as—O God! and canst Thou—— [*He pauses.*
[*A rushing sound from the cavern is heard, and shouts of laughter—afterwards a Spirit passes.*
Japh. In the name
Of the Most High, what art thou?
Spirit (*laughs*). Ha! ha! ha!
Japh. By all that earth holds holiest, speak!
Spirit (*laughs*). Ha! ha!
Japh. By the approaching deluge! by the earth
Which will be strangled by the ocean! by
The deep which will lay open all her fountains!
The heaven which will convert her clouds to seas,
And the Omnipotent who makes and crushes!
Thou unknown, terrible, and indistinct,
Yet awful Thing of Shadows, speak to me!
Why dost thou laugh that horrid laugh?
Spirit. Why weep'st thou?
Japh. For earth and all her children.
Spirit. Ha! ha! ha!
[*Spirit vanishes.*
Japh. How the fiend mocks the tortures of a world,
The coming desolation of an orb,
On which the sun shall rise and warm no life!
How the earth sleeps! and all that in it is
Sleep too upon the very eve of death!
Why should they wake to meet it?—What is here,
Which look like death in life, and speak like things
Born ere this dying world? They come like clouds!
[*Various Spirits pass from the cavern.*
Spirit. Rejoice!
The abhorred race
Which could not keep in Eden their high place,
But listen'd to the voice
Of knowledge without power,
Are nigh the hour
Of death!
Not slow, not single, not by sword, nor sorrow,
Nor years, nor heart-break, nor time's sapping motion,
Shall they drop off. Behold their last to-morrow!
Earth shall be ocean!
And no breath,
Save of the winds, be on the unbounded wave!
Angels shall tire their wings, but find no spot:
Not even a rock from out the liquid grave
Shall lift its point to save,
Or show the place where strong Despair hath died,
After long looking o'er the ocean wide
For the expected ebb which cometh not:
All shall be void,
Destroy'd!
Another element shall be the lord
Of life, and the abhorr'd
Children of dust be quench'd; and of each hue
Of earth nought left but the unbroken blue;
And of the variegated mountain

Shall nought remain
Unchanged, or of the level plain;
Cedar and pine shall lift their tops in vain:
All merged within the universal fountain,
Man, earth, and fire, shall die,
And sea and sky
Look vast and lifeless in the eternal eye.
Upon the foam
Who shall erect a home?
Japh. (*coming forward.*) My sire!
Earth's seed shall not expire;
Only the evil shall be put away
From day.
Avaunt! ye exulting demons of the waste!
Who howl your hideous joy
When God destroys whom you dare not destroy:
Hence! haste!
Back to your inner caves!
Until the waves
Shall search you in your secret place,
And drive your sullen race
Forth, to be roll'd upon the tossing winds
In restless wretchedness along all space!
Spirit. Son of the saved!
When thou and thine have braved
The wide and warring element;
When the great barrier of the deep is rent,
Shall thou and thine be good or happy?—No,
Thy new world and new race shall be of woe—
Less goodly in their aspect, in their years
Less than the glorious giants, who
Yet walk the world in pride,
The Sons of Heaven by many a mortal bride.
Thine shall be nothing of the past, save tears.
And art thou not ashamed
Thus to survive,
And eat, and drink, and wive?
With a base heart so far subdued and tamed,
As even to hear this wide destruction named,
Without such grief and courage, as should rather
Bid thee await the world-dissolving wave,
Than seek a shelter with thy favor'd father,
And build thy city o'er the drown'd earth's grave?
Who would outlive their kind,
Except the base and blind?
Mine
Hateth thine,
As of a different order in the sphere,
But not our own.
There is not one who hath not left a throne
Vacant in heaven, to dwell in darkness here,
Rather than see his mates endure alone.
Go, wretch! and give
A life like thine to other wretches—live!
And when the annihilating waters roar
Above what they have done,

Envy the Giant Patriarchs then no more,
And scorn thy sire as the surviving one!
Thyself for being his son!

Chorus of Spirits issuing from the cavern.

Rejoice!
No more the human voice
Shall vex our joys in middle air
With prayer;
No more
Shall they adore;
And we, who ne'er for ages have adored
The prayer-exacting Lord,
To whom the omission of a sacrifice
Is vice;—
We, we shall view the deep's salt sources pour'd
Until one element shall do the work
Of all in chaos; until they,
The creatures proud of their poor clay,
Shall perish, and their bleached bones shall lurk
In caves, in dens, in clefts of mountains, where
The deep shall follow to their latest lair;
Where even the brutes, in their despair,
Shall cease to prey on man and on each other,
And the striped tiger shall lie down to die
Beside the lamb, as though he were his brother;
Till all things shall be as they were,
Silent and uncreated, save the sky;
While a brief truce
Is made with Death, who shall forbear
The little remnant of the past creation,
To generate new nations for his use;
This remnant, floating o'er the undulation
Of the subduing deluge, from its slime,
When the hot sun hath baked the reeking soil
Into a world, shall give again to Time
New beings—years—diseases—sorrow—crime—
With all companionship of hate and toil,
Until——

Japh. (*interrupting them.*) The Eternal Will
Shall deign to expound this dream
Of good and evil; and redeem
Unto Himself all times, all things;
And, gather'd under His almighty wings,
Abolish hell!
And to the expiated Earth
Restore the beauty of her birth,
Her Eden, in an endless paradise,
Where man no more can fall as once he fell,
And even the very demons shall do well!

Spirits. And when shall take effect this wondrous spell?—

Japh. When the Redeemer cometh; first in pain,
And then in glory.

Spirit. Meantime still struggle in the mortal chain—
Till earth wax hoary;
War with yourselves, and hell, and heaven, in vain—

Until the clouds look gory
With the blood reeking from each battle-plain;
New times, new climes, new arts, new men: but still
The same old tears, old crimes, and oldest ill,
Shall be amongst your race in different forms;
But the same moral storms
Shall oversweep the future, as the waves
In a few hours the glorious giants' graves.*

Chorus of Spirits.

Brethren, rejoice!
Mortal, farewell!
Hark! hark! already we can hear the voice
Of growing ocean's gloomy swell;
The winds, too, plume their piercing wings;
The clouds have nearly fill'd their springs;
The fountains of the great deep shall be broken,
And heaven set wide her windows;† while mankind
View, unacknowledged, each tremendous token—
Still, as they were from the beginning, blind.
We hear the sound they cannot hear,
The mustering thunders of the threatening sphere;
Yet a few hours their coming is delay'd;
Their flashing banners, folded still on high,
Yet undisplay'd,
Save to the Spirit's all-pervading eye.
Howl, howl, O Earth!
Thy death is nearer than thy recent birth:
Tremble, ye mountains, soon to shrink below
The ocean's overflow!
The wave shall break upon your cliffs; and shells,
The little shells, of ocean's least things be
Deposed where now the eagle's offspring dwells—
How shall he shriek o'er the remorseless sea!
And call his nestlings up with fruitless yell,
Unanswer'd, save by the encroaching swell;—
While man shall long in vain for his broad wings,
The wings which could not save:—
Where could he rest them, while the whole space brings
Nought to his eye beyond the deep, his grave?
Brethren, rejoice!
And loudly lift each superhuman voice—
All die,
Save the slight remnant of Seth's seed—
The seed of Seth,
Exempt for future Sorrow's sake from death.
But of the sons of Cain
None shall remain;
And all his goodly daughters
Must lie beneath the desolating waters—
Or, floating upward, with their long hair laid
Along the wave, the cruel Heaven upbraid,

* "And there were giants in the earth in those days, and after; mighty men, which were of old, men of renown."—*Genesis.*
† "The same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up; and the windows of heaven were opened."—*Ibid.*

Which would not spare
Beings even in death so fair.
It is decreed,
All die!
And to the universal human cry
The universal silence shall succeed!
Fly, brethren, fly!
But still rejoice!
We fell!
They fall!
So perish all
These petty foes of Heaven who shrink from hell!

[*The Spirits disappear, soaring upwards.*

Japh. (*solus.*) God hath proclaim'd the destiny of earth;
My father's ark of safety hath announced it;
The very demons shriek it from their caves;
The scroll of Enoch prophesied it long*
In silent books, which, in their silence, say
More to the mind than thunder to the ear:
And yet men listen'd not, nor listen; but
Walk darkling to their doom; which, though so nigh,
Shakes them no more in their dim disbelief
Than their last cries shall shake the Almighty purpose,
Or deaf obedient Ocean, which fulfils it.
No sign yet hangs its banner in the air;
The clouds are few, and of their wonted texture;
The sun will rise upon the earth's last day
As on the fourth day of creation, when
God said unto him "Shine!" and he broke forth
Into the dawn, which lighted not the yet
Unform'd forefather of mankind—but roused
Before the human orison the earlier
Made and far sweeter voices of the birds,
Which in the open firmament of heaven
Have wings like angels, and like them salute
Heaven first each day before the Adamites!
Their matins now draw nigh—the east is kindling,
And they will sing! and day will break! both near,
So near, the awful close! For these must drop
Their outworn pinions on the deep; and day,
After the bright course of a few brief morrows—
Ay, day will rise—but upon what? a chaos,
Which was ere day; and which, renew'd, makes time
Nothing! for, without life, what are the hours?
No more to dust than is eternity
Unto Jehovah, who created both.
Without Him, even eternity would be
A void: without man, time, as made for man,
Dies with man, and is swallow'd in that deep
Which has no fountain; as his race will be
Devour'd by that which drowns his infant world.—
What have we here? Shapes of both earth and air?
No—*all* of heaven, they are so beautiful!

* The book of Enoch, preserved by the Ethiopians, is said by them to be anterior to the flood.

I cannot trace their features; but their forms,
How lovelily they move along the side
Of the gray mountain, scattering its mist!
And after the swart savage spirits, whose
Infernal immortality pour'd forth
Their impious hymn of triumph, they shall be
Welcome as Eden. It may be, they come
To tell me the reprieve of our young world,
For which I have so often pray'd—They come!
Anah! O God! and with her——

Enter SAMIASA, AZAZIEL, ANAH, *and* AHOLIBAMAH.

Anah. Japhet!
Sam. Lo!
A son of Adam!
Aza. What doth the earth-born here,
While all his race are slumbering?
Japh. Angel! what
Dost thou on earth when thou shouldst be on high?
Aza. Know'st thou not, or forgett'st thou, that a part
Of our great function is to guard thine earth?
Japh. But all good angels have forsaken earth,
Which is condemn'd; nay, even the evil fly
The approaching chaos. Anah! Anah! my
In vain, and long, and still to be beloved!
Why walk'st thou with this spirit, in those hours
When no good spirit longer lights below?
Anah. Japhet, I cannot answer thee; yet, yet
Forgive me——
Japh. May the Heaven, which soon no more
Will pardon, do so! for thou art greatly tempted.
Aho. Back to thy tents, insulting son of Noah!
We know thee not.
Japh. The hour may come when thou
May'st know me better; and thy sister knew
Me still the same which I have ever been.
Sam. Son of the Patriarch, who hath ever been
Upright before his God, whate'er thy griefs,
And thy words seem of sorrow, mix'd with wrath,
How have Azaziel, or myself, brought on thee
Wrong?
Japh. Wrong! the greatest of all wrongs; but thou
Say'st well, though she be dust, I did not, could not,
Deserve her. Farewell, Anah! I have said
That word so often! but now say it, ne'er
To be repeated. Angel! or whate'er
Thou art, or must be soon, hast thou the power
To save this beautiful—*these* beautiful
Children of Cain?
Aza. From what?
Japh. And is it so,
That ye too know not? Angels! angels! ye
Have shared man's sin, and, it may be, now must
Partake his punishment; or, at the least,
My sorrow.
Sam. Sorrow! I ne'er thought till now
To hear an Adamite speak riddles to me.

Japh. And hath not the Most High expounded them?
Then ye are lost, as they are lost.
Aho. So be it!
If they love as they are loved, they will not shrink
More to be mortal, than I would to dare
An immortality of agonies
With Samiasa!
Anah. Sister! sister! speak not
Thus.
Aza. Fearest thou, my Anah?
Anah. Yes, for thee:
I would resign the greater remnant of
This little life of mine, before one hour
Of thine eternity should know a pang.
Japh. It is for *him*, then! for the Seraph thou
Hast left me! That is nothing, if thou hast not
Left thy God too! for unions like to these,
Between a mortal and an immortal, cannot
Be happy or be hallow'd. We are sent
Upon the earth to toil and die; and they
Are made to minister on high unto
The Highest; but if he can *save* thee, soon
The hour will come in which celestial aid
Alone can do so.
Anah. Ah! he speaks of death.
Sam. Of death to *us!* and those who are with us!
But that the man seems full of sorrow, I
Could smile.
Japh. I grieve not for myself, nor fear;
I am safe, not for my own deserts, but those
Of a well-doing sire, who hath been found
Righteous enough to save his children. Would
His power was greater of redemption! or
That by exchanging my own life for hers,
Who could alone have made mine happy, she,
The last and loveliest of Cain's race, could share
The ark which shall receive a remnant of
The seed of Seth!
Aho. And dost thou think that we,
With Cain's, the eldest-born of Adam's, blood
Warm in our veins—strong Cain! who was begotten
In Paradise—would mingle with Seth's children?
Seth, the last offspring of old Adam's dotage?
No, not to save all earth, were earth in peril!
Our race hath always dwelt apart from thine
From the beginning, and shall do so ever.
Japh. I did not speak to thee, Aholibamah!
Too much of the forefather whom thou vauntest
Has come down in that haughty blood which springs
From him who shed the first, and that a brother's!
But thou, my Anah!—let me call thee mine,
Albeit thou art not; 'tis a word I cannot
Part with, although I must from thee. My Anah!
Thou who dost rather make me dream that Abel
Had left a daughter, whose pure pious race
Survived in thee, so much unlike thou art

The rest of the stern Cainites, save in beauty,
For all of them are fairest in their favor —
Aho. (*interrupting him.*) And wouldst thou have her like
our father's foe
In mind, in soul? If *I* partook thy thought,
And dream'd that aught of *Abel* was in *her!*—
Get thee hence, son of Noah; thou makest strife.
Japh. Offspring of Cain, thy father did so!
Aho. But
He slew not Seth: and what hast thou to do
With other deeds between his God and him?
Japh. Thou speakest well: his God hath judged him, and
I had not named his deed, but that thyself
Didst seem to glory in him, nor to shrink
From what he had done.
Aho. He was our fathers' father;
The eldest born of man, the strongest, bravest,
And most enduring:—Shall I blush for him,
From whom we had our being? Look upon
Our race; behold their stature and their beauty,
Their courage, strength, and length of days——
Japh. They are number'd.
Aho. Be it so! but while yet their hours endure,
I glory in my brethren and our fathers!
Japh. My sire and race but glory in their God,
Anah! and thou?——
Anah. Whate'er our God decrees,
The God of Seth as Cain, I must obey,
And will endeavor patiently to obey.
But could I dare to pray in this dread hour
Of universal vengeance (if such should be),
It would not be to live, alone exempt
Of all my house. My sister! oh, my sister!
What were the world, or other worlds, or all
The brightest future, without the sweet past—
Thy love—my father's—all the life, and all
The things which sprang up with me, like the stars,
Making my dim existence radiant with
Soft lights which were not mine? Aholibamah!
Oh! if there should be mercy—seek it, find it:
I abhor death, because that thou must die.
Aho. What! hath this dreamer, with his father's ark,
The bugbear he hath built to scare the world,
Shaken *my* sister? Are *we* not the loved
Of seraphs? and if we were not, must we
Cling to a son of Noah for our lives?
Rather than thus——But the enthusiast dreams
The worst of dreams, the fantasies engender'd
By hopeless love and heated vigils. Who
Shall shake these solid mountains, this firm earth,
And bid those clouds and waters take a shape
Distinct from that which we and all our sires
Have seen them wear on their eternal way?
Who shall do this?
Japh. He whose one word produced them.
Aho. Who *heard* that word?

Japh. The universe, which leap'd
To life before it. Ah! smil'st thou still in scorn?
Turn to thy seraphs: if they attest it not,
They are none.
Sam. Aholibamah, own thy God!
Aho. I have ever hail'd our Maker, Samiasa,
As thine, and mine; a God of love, not sorrow.
Japh. Alas! what else is love but sorrow? Even
He who made earth in love, had soon to grieve
Above its first and best inhabitants.
Aho. 'Tis said so.
Japh. It is even so.

Enter NOAH *and* SHEM.

Noah. Japhet! what
Dost thou here with these children of the wicked?
Dread'st thou not to partake their coming doom?
Japh. Father, it cannot be a sin to seek
To save an earth-born being; and behold,
These are not of the sinful, since they have
The fellowship of angels.
Noah. These are they, then,
Who leave the throne of God, to take them wives
From out the race of Cain; the sons of heaven,
Who seek earth's daughters for their beauty?
Aza. Patriarch!
Thou hast said it.
Noah. Woe, woe, woe to such communion!
Has not God made a barrier between earth
And heaven, and limited each, kind to kind?
Sam. Was not man made in high Jehovah's image?
Did God not love what He had made? And what
Do we but imitate and emulate
His love unto created love?
Noah. I am
But man, and was not made to judge mankind,
Far less the sons of God; but as our God
Has deign'd to commune with me, and reveal
His judgments, I reply, that the descent
Of seraphs from their everlasting seat
Unto a perishable and perishing,
Even on the very *eve* of *perishing*, world,
Cannot be good.
Aza. What! though it were to save?
Noah. Not ye in all your glory can redeem
What He who made you glorious hath condemn'd.
Were your immortal mission safety, 'twould
Be general, not for two, though beautiful;
And beautiful they are, but not the less
Condemn'd.
Japh. Oh, father! say it not.
Noah. Son! son!
If that thou wouldst avoid their doom, forget
That they exist: they soon shall cease to be;
While thou shalt be the sire of a new world,
And better.

Japh. Let me die with *this*, and *them!*
Noah. Thou *shouldst* for such a thought, but shalt not; He
Who *can*, redeems thee.
Sam. And why him and thee,
More than what he, thy son, prefers to both?
Noah. Ask Him who made thee greater than myself
And mine, but not less subject to His own
Almightiness. And lo! His mildest and
Least to be tempted messenger appears!

Enter RAPHAEL *the Archangel.*

Raph. Spirits!
Whose seat is near the throne,
What do ye here?
Is thus a seraph's duty to be shown,
Now that the hour is near
When earth must be alone?
Return!
Adore and burn
In glorious homage with the elected "seven,"
Your place is heaven.
Sam. Raphael!
The first and fairest of the sons of God,
How long hath this been law,
That earth by angels must be left untrod?
Earth! which oft saw
Jehovah's footsteps not disdain her sod!
The world He loved, and made
For love; and oft have we obey'd
His frequent mission with delighted pinions:
Adoring Him in His least works display'd;
Watching this youngest star of His dominions;
And as the latest birth of His great word,
Eager to keep it worthy of our Lord.
Why is thy brow severe?
And wherefore speak'st thou of destruction near?
Raph. Had Samiasa and Azaziel been
In their true place, with the angelic choir,
Written in fire
They would have seen
Jehovah's late decree,
And not inquired their Maker's breath of me:
But ignorance must ever be
A part of sin;
And even the spirits' knowledge shall grow less
As they wax proud within:
For Blindness is the first-born of Excess.
When all good angels left the world, ye stay'd,
Stung with strange passions, and debased
By mortal feelings for a mortal maid:
But ye are pardon'd thus far, and replaced
With your pure equals. Hence! away! away!
Or stay,
And lose eternity by that delay!
Aza. And thou! if earth be thus forbidden
In the decree

To us until this moment hidden,
Dost thou not err, as we,
In being here?

Raph. I came to call ye back to your fit sphere,
In the great name and at the word of God.
Dear, dearest in themselves, and scarce less dear
That which I came to do: till now we trod
Together the eternal space, together
Let us still walk the stars. True, Earth must die!
Her race, return'd into her womb, must wither,
And much which she inherits: but oh! why
Cannot this earth be made, or be destroy'd,
Without involving ever some vast void
In the immortal ranks? immortal still
In their immeasurable forfeiture.
Our brother Satan fell; his burning will
Rather than longer worship dared endure!
But ye who still are pure!
Seraphs! less mighty than that mightiest one,
Think how he was undone!
And think if tempting man can compensate
For heaven desired too late?
Long have I warr'd,
Long must I war,
With him who deem'd it hard
To be created, and to acknowledge Him
Who 'midst the cherubim
Made him as suns to a dependent star,
Leaving the archangels at His right hand dim.
I loved him—beautiful he was; O heaven!
Save *His* who made, what beauty and what power
Was ever like to Satan's! Would the hour
In which he fell could ever be forgiven!
The wish is impious: but, oh ye!
Yet undestroy'd, be warn'd! Eternity
With him, or with his God, is in your choice!
He hath not tempted you, he cannot tempt
The angels, from his further snares exempt:
But man hath listen'd to his voice,
And ye to woman's—beautiful she is,
The serpent's voice less subtle than her kiss.
The snake but vanquish'd dust: but she will draw
A second host from heaven, to break heaven's law.
Yet, yet, oh fly:
Ye cannot die;
But they
Shall pass away,
While ye shall fill with shrieks the upper sky
For perishable clay,
Whose memory in your immortality
Shall long outlast the sun which gave them day.
Think how your essence differeth from theirs
In all but suffering! Why partake
The agony to which they must be heirs—
Born to be plough'd with years, and sown with cares,
And reap'd by Death, lord of the human soil?

Even had their days been left to toil their path
Through time to dust, unshorten'd by God's wrath,
Still they are Evil's prey and Sorrow's spoil.
Aho. Let them fly!
I hear the voice which says that all must die,
Sooner than our white-bearded patriarchs died;
And that on high
An ocean is prepared,
While from below
The deep shall rise to meet heaven's overflow.
Few shall be spared,
It seems; and, of that few, the race of Cain
Must lift their eyes to Adam's God in vain.
Sister! since it is so,
And the eternal Lord
In vain would be implored
For the remission of one hour of woe,
Let us resign even what we have adored,
And meet the wave, as we would meet the sword,
If not unmoved, yet undismay'd,
And wailing less for us than those who shall
Survive in mortal or immortal thrall.
And, when the fatal waters are allay'd,
Weep for the myriads who can weep no more.
Fly, Seraphs! to your own eternal shore,
Where winds nor howl nor waters roar.
Our portion is to die,
And yours to live for ever:
But which is best, a dead eternity,
Or living, is but known to the great Giver.
Obey Him, as we shall obey;
I would not keep this life of mine of clay
An hour beyond His will;
Nor see ye lose a portion of His grace,
For all the mercy which Seth's race
Find still.
Fly!
And as your pinions bear ye back to heaven,
Think that my love still mounts with thee on high,
Samiasa!
And if I look up with a tearless eye,
'Tis that an angel's bride disdains to weep—
Farewell! Now rise, inexorable Deep!
Anah. And must we die?
And must I lose thee too,
Azaziel?
Oh, my heart! my heart!
Thy prophecies were true,
And yet thou wert so happy too!
The blow, though not unlook'd for, falls as new:
But yet depart!
Ah! why?
Yet let me not retain thee—fly!
My pangs can be but brief; but thine would be
Eternal, if repulsed from heaven for me.
Too much already hast thou deign'd

To one of Adam's race!
Our doom is sorrow; not to us alone,
But to the spirits who have not disdain'd
To love us, cometh anguish with disgrace.
The first who taught us knowledge hath been hurl'd
From his once archangelic throne
Into some unknown world:
And thou, Azaziel! No—
Thou shalt not suffer woe
For me. Away! nor weep!
Thou canst not weep; but yet
May'st suffer more, not weeping: then forget
Her, whom the surges of the all-strangling Deep
Can bring no pang like this. Fly! fly!
Being gone, 'twill be less difficult to die.
Japh. Oh, say not so!
Father! and thou, archangel, thou!
Surely celestial Mercy lurks below
That pure severe serenity of brow;
Let them not meet this sea without a shore,
Save in our ark, or let me be no more!
Noah. Peace, child of passion, peace!
If not within thy heart, yet with thy tongue
Do God no wrong!
Live as He wills it—die when He ordains,
A righteous death, unlike the seed of Cain's.
Cease, or be sorrowful in silence; cease
To weary Heaven's ear with thy selfish plaint.
Wouldst thou have God commit a sin for thee?
Such would it be
To alter His intent
For a mere mortal sorrow. Be a man!
And bear what Adam's race must bear, and can.
Japh. Ay, father! but when they are gone,
And we are all alone,
Floating upon the azure desert, and
The depth beneath us hides our own dear land,
And dearer, silent friends and brethren, all
Buried in its immeasurable breast,
Who, who, our tears, our shrieks, shall then command?
Can we in desolation's peace have rest?
O God! be Thou a God, and spare
Yet while 'tis time!
Renew not Adam's fall:
Mankind were then but twain,
But they are numerous now as are the waves
And the tremendous rain,
Whose drops shall be less thick than would their graves,
Were graves permitted to the seed of Cain.
Noah. Silence, vain boy! each word of thine 's a crime!
Angel! forgive this stripling's fond despair.
Raph. Seraphs! these mortals speak in passion: ye,
Who are, or should be, passionless and pure,
May now return with me.
Sam. It may not be:
We have chosen, and will endure.

Raph. Say'st thou?
Aza. He hath said it, and I say, Amen!
Raph. Again!
Then from this hour,
Shorn as ye are of all celestial power,
And aliens from your God,
Farewell!
Japh. Alas! where shall they dwell?
Hark, hark! Deep sounds, and deeper still,
Are howling from the mountain's bosom:
There 's not a breath of wind upon the hill,
Yet quivers every leaf, and drops each blossom:
Earth groans as if beneath a heavy load.
Noah. Hark! hark! the sea-birds cry!
In clouds they overspread the lurid sky,
And hover round the mountain, where before
Never a white wing, wetted by the wave,
Yet dared to soar,
Even when the waters wax'd too fierce to brave.
Soon it shall be their only shore,
And then, no more!
Japh. The sun! the sun!
He riseth, but his better light is gone,
And a black circle, bound
His glaring disk around,
Proclaims Earth's last of summer days hath shone!
The clouds return into the hues of night,
Save where their brazen-colored edges streak
The verge where brighter morns were wont to break.
Noah. And lo! yon flash of light,
The distant thunder's harbinger, appears!
It cometh! hence! away!
Leave to the elements their evil prey!
Hence to where our all-hallowed ark uprears
Its safe and wreckless sides.
Japh. Oh, father, stay!
Leave not my Anah to the swallowing tides!
Noah. Must we not leave all life to such? Begone!
Japh. Not I.
Noah. Then die
With them!
How darest thou look on that prophetic sky,
And seek to save what all things now condemn,
In overwhelming unison
With just Jehovah's wrath?
Japh. Can rage and justice join in the same path?
Noah. Blasphemer! darest thou murmur even now?
Raph. Patriarch, be still a father! smooth thy brow:
Thy son, despite his folly, shall not sink:
He knows not what he says, yet shall not drink
With sobs the salt foam of the swelling waters;
But be, when Passion passeth, good as thou,
Nor perish like Heaven's children with Man's daughters.
Aho. The tempest cometh; Heaven and Earth unite
For the annihilation of all life.
Unequal is the strife

Between our strength and the Eternal Might!
Sam. But ours is with thee: we will bear ye far
To some untroubled star,
Where thou and Anah shalt partake our lot:
And if thou dost not weep for thy lost earth,
Our forfeit heaven shall also be forgot.
Anah. Oh! my dear father's tents, my place of birth!
And mountains, land, and woods! when ye are not,
Who shall dry up my tears?
Aza. Thy Spirit-lord.
Fear not; though we are shut from heaven,
Yet much is ours, whence we can not be driven.
Raph. Rebel! thy words are wicked as thy deeds
Shall henceforth be but weak: the flaming sword,
Which chased the first-born out of Paradise,
Still flashes in the angelic hands.
Aza. It cannot slay us: threaten dust with death,
And talk of weapons unto that which bleeds?
What are thy swords in our immortal eyes?
Raph. The moment cometh to approve thy strength;
And learn at length
How vain to war with what thy God commands.
Thy former force was in thy faith.

Enter MORTALS, *flying for refuge.*

Chorus of MORTALS.

The heavens and earth are mingling—God! O God!
What have we done? Yet spare!
Hark! even the forest beasts howl forth their prayer!
The dragon crawls from out his den,
To herd, in terror, innocent with men!
And the birds scream their agony through air.
Yet, yet, Jehovah! yet withdraw Thy rod
Of wrath, and pity thine own world's despair!
Hear not Man only but all Nature plead!
Raph. Farewell, thou earth! Ye wretched sons of clay,
I can not, must not, aid you. 'Tis decreed!
[*Exit* RAPHAEL.
Japh. Some clouds sweep on as vultures for their prey,
While others, fix'd as rocks, await the word
At which their wrathful vials shall be pour'd.
No azure more shall robe the firmament,
Nor spangled stars be glorious: Death hath risen:
In the Sun's place, a pale and ghastly glare
Hath wound itself around the dying air.
Aza. Come, Anah! quit this chaos-founded prison,
To which the elements again repair,
To turn it into what it was: beneath
The shelter of these wings thou shalt be safe,
As was the eagle's nestling once within
Its mother's.—Let the coming chaos chafe
With all its elements! heed not their din!
A brighter world than this, where thou shalt breathe
Ethereal life, will we explore:
These darken'd clouds are not the only skies.

[AZAZIEL *and* SAMIASA *fly off, and disappear with* ANAH *and* AHOLIBAMAH.

Japh. They are gone! They have disappear'd amidst the roar
Of the forsaken world; and never more,
Whether they live, or die with all earth's life,
Now near its last, can aught restore
Anah unto these eyes.

Chorus of MORTALS.

Oh, son of Noah! mercy on thy kind!
What, wilt thou leave us all—all—*all* behind?
While safe amidst the elemental strife,
Thou sitt'st within thy guarded ark?

A Mother (*offering her infant to* JAPHET). Oh, let this child embark!
I brought him forth in woe,
But thought it joy
To see him to my bosom clinging so.
Why was he born?
What hath he done—
My unwean'd son—
To move Jehovah's wrath or scorn?
What is there in this milk of mine, that Death
Should stir all heaven and earth up to destroy
My boy,
And roll the waters o'er his placid breath?
Save him, thou seed of Seth!
Or cursed be—with Him who made
Thee and thy race, for which we are betray'd!

Japh. Peace! 'tis no hour for curses, but for prayer!

Chorus of MORTALS.

For prayer!!!
And where
Shall prayer ascend
When the swoln clouds unto the mountains bend
And burst,
And gushing oceans every barrier rend,
Until the very deserts know no thirst!
Accurst
Be He who made thee and thy sire!
We deem our curses vain; we must expire;
But as we know the worst,
Why should our hymn be raised, our knees be bent
Before the implacable Omnipotent,
Since we must fall the same?
If He hath made earth, let it be His shame
To make a world for torture.—Lo! they come,
The loathsome waters, in their rage!
And with their roar make wholesome Nature dumb!
The forest's trees (coeval with the hour
When Paradise upsprung,
Ere Eve gave Adam knowledge for her dower,
Or Adam his first hymn of slavery sung),

So massy, vast, yet green in their old age,
Are overtopp'd,
Their summer blossoms by the surges lopp'd,
Which rise, and rise, and rise.
Vainly we look up to the louring skies—
They meet the seas,
And shut out God from our beseeching eyes.
Fly, son of Noah, fly! and take thine ease
In thine allotted ocean-tent;
And view, all floating o'er the element,
The corpses of the world of thy young days:
Then to Jehovah raise
Thy song of praise!
A Mortal. Blessed are the dead
Who die in the Lord!
And though the waters be o'er earth outspread,
Yet, as *His* word,
Be the decree adored!
He gave me life—He taketh but
The breath which is His own;
And though these eyes should be for ever shut,
Nor longer this weak voice before His throne
Be heard in supplicating tone,
Still blessed be the Lord,
For what is past,
For that which is:
For all are His,
From first to last—
Time—space—eternity—life—death—
The vast known and immeasurable unknown
He made, and can unmake;
And shall *I*, for a little gasp of breath,
Blaspheme and groan?
No; let me die, as I have lived, in faith,
Nor quiver, though the universe may quake.

Chorus of MORTALS.

Where shall we fly?
Not to the mountains high;
For now their torrents rush, with double roar,
To meet the ocean, which, advancing still,
Already grasps each drowning hill,
Nor leaves an unsearch'd cave.

Enter a WOMAN.

Woman. Oh, save me, save!
Our valley is no more:
My father and my father's tent,
My brethren and my brethren's herds,
The pleasant trees that o'er our noonday bent
And sent forth evening songs from sweetest birds,
The little rivulet which freshen'd all
Our pastures green,
No more are to be seen.
When to the mountain cliff I climb'd this morn,
I turn'd to bless the spot,

And not a leaf appear'd about to fall;—
And now they are not!
Why was I born?
Japh. To die! in youth to die!
And happier in that doom,
Than to behold the universal tomb
Which I
Am thus condemn'd to weep above in vain.
Why, when all perish, why must I remain?

[*The Waters rise; Men fly in every direction; many are overtaken by the waves. The Chorus of Mortals disperses in search of safety up the Mountains;* JAPHET *remains upon a rock, while the Ark floats towards him in the distance.*

CAIN:

A MYSTERY.

"Now the Serpent was more subtile than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made."—GENESIS, iii. 1.

TO

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.,

THIS MYSTERY OF CAIN IS INSCRIBED,

BY HIS OBLIGED FRIEND, AND FAITHFUL SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE following scenes are entitled "A Mystery," in conformity with the ancient title annexed to dramas upon similar subjects, which were styled "Mysteries, or Moralities." The author has by no means taken the same liberties with his subject which were common formerly, as may be seen by any reader curious enough to refer to those very profane productions, whether in English, French, Italian, or Spanish. The author has endeavored to preserve the language adapted to his characters; and where it is (and this is but rarely) taken from actual *Scripture*, he has made as little alteration, even of words, as the rhythm would permit. The reader will recollect that the Book of Genesis does not state that Eve was tempted by a demon, but by "the serpent;" and that only because he was "the most subtile of all the beasts of the field." Whatever interpretation the Rabbins and the Fathers may have put upon this, I take the words as I find them, and reply, with Bishop Watson upon similar occasions, when the Fathers were quoted to him, as Moderator in the schools of Cambridge, "Behold the Book!"—holding up the Scripture. It is to be recollected that my present subject has nothing to do with the *New Testament*, to which no reference can be here made without anachronism. With the poems upon similar topics I have not

been recently familiar. Since I was twenty, I have never read Milton; but I had read him so frequently before, that this may make little difference. Gesner's "Death of Abel" I have never read since I was eight years of age, at Aberdeen. The general impression of my recollection is delight; but of the contents I remember only that Cain's wife was called Mahala, and Abel's Thirza: in the following pages I have called them "Adah" and "Zillah," the earliest female names which occur in Genesis; they were those of Lamech's wives: those of Cain and Abel are not called by their names. Whether, then, a coincidence of subject may have caused the same in expression, I know nothing, and care as little.

The reader will please to bear in mind (wnat few choose to recollect), that there is no allusion to a future state in any of the books of Moses, nor indeed in the Old Testament. For a reason for this extraordinary omission, he may consult Warburton's "Divine Legation;" whether satisfactory or not, no better has yet been assigned. I have therefore supposed it new to Cain, without, I hope, any perversion of Holy Writ.

With regard to the language of Lucifer, it was difficult for me to make him talk like a clergyman upon the same subjects; but I have done what I could to restrain him within the bounds of spiritual politeness.

If he disclaims having tempted Eve in the shape of the Serpent, it is only because the Book of Genesis has not the most distant allusion to anything of the kind, but merely to the Serpent in his serpentine capacity.

Note.—The reader will perceive that the author has partly adopted in this poem the notion of Cuvier, that the world had been destroyed several times before the creation of man. This speculation, derived from the different strata and the bones of enormous and unknown animals found in them, is not contrary to the Mosaic account, but rather confirms it; as no human bones have yet been discovered in those strata, although those of many known animals are found near the remains of the unknown. The assertion of Lucifer, that the pre-Adamite world was also peopled by rational beings much more intelligent than man, and proportionably powerful to the mammoth, &c. &c., is, of course, a poetical fiction to help him to make out his case.

I ought to add, that there is a "tramelogedia" of Alfieri, called "Abele."—I have never read that, nor any other of the posthumous works of the writer, except his Life.

CAIN.

Dramatis Personæ.

Men.	*Spirits.*	*Women.*
ADAM.	ANGEL OF THE LORD.	EVE.
CAIN.	LUCIFER.	ADAH.
ABEL.		ZILLAH.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

The Land without Paradise.—Time, Sunrise.

ADAM, EVE, CAIN, ABEL, ADAH, ZILLAH, *offering a Sacrifice.*

Adam. God, the Eternal! Infinite! All-wise!—
Who out of darkness on the deep didst make
Light on the waters with a word—all hail!
Jehovah, with returning light, all hail!

Eve. God! who didst name the day, and separate
Morning from night, till then divided never—
Who didst divide the wave from wave, and call
Part of Thy work the firmament—all hail!

Abel. God! who didst call the elements into
Earth—ocean—air—and fire, and with the day
And night, and worlds, which these illuminate,
Or shadow, madest beings to enjoy them,
And love both them and Thee—all hail! all hail!

Adah. God, the Eternal! Parent of all things!
Who didst create these best and beauteous beings,
To be beloved, more than all, save Thee—
Let me love Thee and them:—All hail! all hail!

Zillah. O God! who loving, making, blessing all,
Yet didst permit the Serpent to creep in,
And drive my father forth from Paradise,
Keep us from further evil:—Hail! all hail!

Adam. Son Cain, my first-born, wherefore art thou silent?

Cain. Why should I speak?
Adam. To pray.
Cain. Have ye not pray'd?
Adam. We have, most fervently.
Cain. And loudly: I
Have heard you.
Adam. So will God, I trust.
Abel. Amen!
Adam. But thou, my eldest born, art silent still.
Cain. 'Tis better I should be so.
Adam. Wherefore so?
Cain. I have nought to ask.
Adam. Nor aught to thank for?
Cain. No.
Adam. Dost thou not live?
Cain. Must I not die?
Eve. Alas!
The fruit of our forbidden tree begins
To fall.
Adam. And we must gather it again.
O God! why didst Thou plant the tree of knowledge?
Cain. And wherefore pluck'd ye not the tree of life?
Ye might have then defied Him.
Adam. Oh! my son,
Blaspheme not: these are serpents' words.
Cain. Why not?
The snake spoke *truth*; it *was* the tree of knowledge;
It *was* the tree of life; knowledge is good,
And life is good: and how can both be evil?
Eve. My boy! thou speakest as I spoke, in sin,
Before thy birth: let me not see renew'd
My misery in thine. I have repented.
Let me not see my offspring fall into
The snares beyond the walls of Paradise,
Which e'en in Paradise destroy'd his parents.
Content thee with what *is*. Had we been so,
Thou now hadst been contented.—Oh, my son!
Adam. Our orisons completed, let us hence,
Each to his task of toil—not heavy, though
Needful: the earth is young, and yields us kindly
Her fruits with little labor.
Eve. Cain, my son,
Behold thy father cheerful and resign'd,
And do as he doth.

[*Exeunt* ADAM *and* EVE.

Zillah. Wilt thou not, my brother?
Abel. Why wilt thou wear this gloom upon thy brow,
Which can avail thee nothing, save to rouse
The Eternal anger?
Adah. My beloved Cain,
Wilt thou frown even on me?
Cain. No, Adah! no;
I fain would be alone a little while.
Abel, I'm sick at heart; but it will pass.
Precede me, brother—I will follow shortly.
And you, too, sisters, tarry not behind;

Your gentleness must not be harshly met:
I'll follow you anon.
Adah. If not, I will
Return to seek you here.
Abel. The peace of God
Be on your spirit, brother!
[*Exeunt* ABEL, ZILLAH, *and* ADAH.
Cain (*solus*). And this is
Life!—Toil! and wherefore should I toil?—because
My father could not keep his place in Eden.
What had *I* done in this?—I was unborn:
I sought not to be born; nor love the state
To which that birth has brought me. Why did he
Yield to the serpent and the woman? or,
Yielding, why suffer? What was there in this?
The tree was planted, and why not for him?
If not, why place him near it, where it grew,
The fairest in the centre? They have but
One answer to all questions, "'Twas *His* will,
And *He* is good." How know I that? Because
He is all-powerful, must all-good, too, follow?
I judge but by the fruits—and they are bitter—
Which I must feed on for a fault not mine.
Whom have we here?—A shape like to the angels,
Yet of a sterner and a sadder aspect
Of spiritual essence: why do I quake?
Why should I fear him more than other spirits,
Whom I see daily wave their fiery swords
Before the gates round which I linger oft,
In twilight's hour, to catch a glimpse of those
Gardens which are my just inheritance,
Ere the night closes o'er the inhibited walls
And the immortal trees which overtop
The cherubim-defended battlements?
If I shrink not from these, the fire-arm'd angels,
Why should I quail from him who now approaches?
Yet he seems mightier far than them, nor less
Beauteous, and yet not all as beautiful
As he hath been, and might be: sorrow seems
Half of his immortality. And is it
So? and can aught grieve save humanity?
He cometh.
Enter LUCIFER.
Lucifer. Mortal!
Cain. Spirit, who art thou?
Lucifer. Master of Spirits.
Cain. And being so, canst thou
Leave them, and walk with dust?
Lucifer. I know the thoughts
Of dust, and feel for it, and with you.
Cain. How!
You know my thoughts?
Lucifer. They are the thoughts of all
Worthy of thought;—'tis your immortal part
Which speaks within you.
Cain. What immortal part?

This has not been revealed: the tree of life
Was withheld from us by my father's folly,
While that of knowledge, by my mother's haste,
Was pluck'd too soon; and all the fruit is death!
Lucifer. They have deceived thee; thou shalt live.
Cain. I live,
But live to die: and, living, see no thing
To make death hateful, save an innate clinging,
A loathsome, and yet all invincible
Instinct of life, which I abhor, as I
Despise myself, yet cannot overcome—
And so I live. Would I had never lived!
Lucifer. Thou livest, and must live for ever: think not
The earth, which is thine outward cov'ring, is
Existence—it will cease, and thou wilt be
No less than thou art now.
Cain. No *less!* and why
No more?
Lucifer. It may be thou shalt be as we.
Cain. And ye?
Lucifer. Are everlasting.
Cain. Are ye happy?
Lucifer. We are mighty.
Cain. Are ye happy?
Lucifer. No: art thou?
Cain. How should I be so? Look on me!
Lucifer. Poor clay!
And thou pretendest to be wretched! Thou!
Cain. I am:—and thou, with all thy might, what art thou?
Lucifer. One who aspired to be what made thee, and
Would not have made thee what thou art.
Cain. Ah!
Thou look'st almost a god; and——
Lucifer. I am none:
And having fail'd to be one, would be nought
Save what I am. He conquer'd; let Him reign!
Cain. Who?
Lucifer. Thy sire's Maker, and the earth's.
Cain. And heaven's,
And all that in them is. So I have heard
His seraphs sing; and so my father saith.
Lucifer. They say—what they must sing and say, on pain
Of being that which I am—and thou art—
Of spirits and of men.
Cain. And what is that?
Lucifer. Souls who dare use their immortality—
Souls who dare look the Omnipotent tyrant in
His everlasting face, and tell Him, that
His evil is not good! If He has made,
As He saith—which I know not, nor believe—
But, if He made us—He cannot unmake;
We are immortal!—nay, He'd *have* us so,
That He may torture:—let Him! He is great—
But, in His greatness, is no happier than
We in our conflict! Goodness would not make
Evil; and what else hath He made? But let Him

Sit on His vast and solitary throne,
Creating worlds, to make eternity
Less burdensome to His immense existence
And unparticipated solitude!
Let Him crowd orb on orb: He is alone
Indefinite, indissoluble tyrant!
Could He but crush Himself, 'twere the best boon
He ever granted: but, let Him reign on,
And multiply Himself in misery!
Spirits and men, at least we sympathize—
And, suffering in concert, make our pangs,
Innumerable, more endurable,
By the unbounded sympathy of all—
With all! But *He!* so wretched in His height,
So restless in His wretchedness, must still
Create, and re-create——

Cain. Thou speak'st to me of things which long have swum
In visions through my thought: I never could
Reconcile what I saw with what I heard.
My father and my mother talk to me
Of serpents, and of fruits and trees: I see
The gates of what they call their Paradise
Guarded by fiery-sworded cherubim,
Which shut them out, and me: I feel the weight
Of daily toil and constant thought: I look
Around a world where I seem nothing, with
Thoughts which arise within me, as if they
Could master all things:—but I thought alone
This misery was *mine*.—My father is
Tamed down; my mother has forgot the mind
Which made her thirst for knowledge at the risk
Of an eternal curse; my brother is
A watching shepherd boy, who offers up
The firstlings of the flock to Him who bids
The earth yield nothing to us without sweat;
My sister Zillah sings an earlier hymn
Than the birds' matins; and my Adah, my
Own and beloved, she, too, understands not
The mind which overwhelms me: never till
Now met I aught to sympathize with me.
'Tis well—I rather would consort with spirits.

Lucifer. And hadst thou not been fit by thine own soul
For such companionship, I would not now
Have stood before thee as I am: a serpent
Had been enough to charm ye, as before.

Cain. Ah! didst *thou* tempt my mother?

Lucifer. I tempt none,
Save with the truth: was not the tree, the tree
Of knowledge? and was not the tree of life
Still fruitful? Did *I* bid her pluck them not?
Did *I* plant things prohibited within
The reach of beings innocent, and curious
By their own innocence? I would have made ye
Gods; and even He who thrust ye forth, so thrust ye
Because "ye should not eat the fruits of life,
And become gods as We." Were those His words?

Cain. They were, as I have heard from those who heard them,
In thunder.
Lucifer. Then who was the demon? He
Who would not let ye live, or he who would
Have made ye live for ever in the joy
And power of knowledge?
Cain. Would they had snatch'd both
The fruits, or neither!
Lucifer. One is yours already;
The other may be still.
Cain. How so?
Lucifer. By being
Yourselves, in your resistance. Nothing can
Quench the mind, if the mind will be itself
And centre of surrounding things—'tis made
To sway.
Cain. But didst thou tempt my parents?
Lucifer. I?
Poor clay! what should I tempt them for, or how?
Cain. They say the serpent was a spirit.
Lucifer. Who
Saith that? It is not written so on high:
The Proud One will not so far falsify,
Though man's vast fears and little vanity
Would make him cast upon the spiritual nature
His own low failing. The snake *was* the snake—
No more, and yet not less than those he tempted,
In nature being earth also—*more* in *wisdom*,
Since he could overcome them, and foreknew
The knowledge fatal to their narrow joys.
Think'st thou I'd take the shape of things that die?
Cain. But the thing had a demon?
Lucifer. He but woke one
In those he spake to with his forky tongue.
I tell thee that the serpent was no more
Than a mere serpent: ask the cherubim
Who guard the tempting tree. When thousand ages
Have roll'd o'er your dead ashes, and your seed's,
The seed of the then world may thus array
Their earliest fault in fable, and attribute
To me a shape I scorn, as I scorn all
That bows to Him, who made things but to bend
Before His sullen, sole eternity;
But we who see the truth must speak it. Thy
Fond parents listen'd to a creeping thing,
And fell. For what should spirits tempt them? What
Was there to envy in the narrow bounds
Of Paradise, that spirits who pervade
Space—— but I speak to thee of what thou know'st not,
With all thy tree of knowledge.
Cain. But thou canst not
Speak aught of knowledge which I would not know,
And do not thirst to know, and bear a mind
To know.
Lucifer. And heart to look on?
Cain. Be it proved.

Lucifer. Darest thou to look on Death?
Cain. He has not yet
Been seen.
Lucifer. But must be undergone.
Cain. My father
Says he is something dreadful, and my mother
Weeps when he is named; and Abel lifts his eyes
To heaven, and Zillah casts hers to the earth,
And sighs a prayer; and Adah looks on me,
And speaks not.
Lucifer. And thou?
Cain. Thoughts unspeakable
Crowd in my breast to burning, when I hear
Of this almighty Death, who is, it seems,
Inevitable. Could I wrestle with him?
I wrestled with the lion, when a boy,
In play, till he ran roaring from my gripe.
Lucifer. It has no shape: but will absorb all things
That bear the form of earth-born being.
Cain. Ah!
I thought it was a being: who could do
Such evil things to being save a being?
Lucifer. Ask the Destroyer.
Cain. Who?
Lucifer. The Maker—call Him
Which name thou wilt; He makes but to destroy.
Cain. I knew not that, yet thought it, since I heard
Of death: although I know not what it is,
Yet it seems horrible. I have look'd out
In the vast desolate night in search of him;
And when I saw gigantic shadows in
The umbrage of the walls of Eden, chequer'd
By the far-flashing of the cherubs' swords,
I watch'd for what I thought his coming; for
With fear rose longing in my heart to know
What 'twas which shook us all—but nothing came.
And then I turn'd my weary eyes from off
Our native and forbidden Paradise,
Up to the lights above us, in the azure,
Which are so beautiful: shall they, too, die?
Lucifer. Perhaps—but long outlive both thine and thee.
Cain. I'm glad of that: I would not have them die—
They are so lovely. What is death? I fear,
I feel, it is a dreadful thing; but what,
I cannot compass: 'tis denounced against us,
Both them who sinn'd and sinn'd not, as an ill—
What ill?
Lucifer. To be resolved into the earth.
Cain. But shall I know it?
Lucifer. As I know not death,
I cannot answer.
Cain. Were I quiet earth,
That were no evil: would I ne'er had been
Aught else but dust!
Lucifer. That is a grovelling wish,
Less than thy father's, for he wish'd to know.

Cain. But not to live, or wherefore pluck'd he not
The life-tree?
Lucifer. He was hinder'd.
Cain. Deadly error!
Not to snatch first that fruit:—but ere he pluck'd
The knowledge, he was ignorant of death.
Alas! I scarcely now know what it is,
And yet I fear it—fear I know not what!
Lucifer. And I, who know all things, fear nothing: see
What is true knowledge.
Cain. Wilt thou teach me all?
Lucifer. Ay, upon one condition.
Cain. Name it.
Lucifer. That
Thou dost fall down and worship me—thy Lord.
Cain. Thou art not the Lord my father worships.
Lucifer. No.
Cain. His equal?
Lucifer. No: I have nought in common with Him!
Nor would; I would be aught above—beneath—
Aught save a sharer or a servant of
His power. I dwell apart; but I am great:—
Many there are who worship me, and more
Who shall—be thou amongst the first.
Cain. I never
As yet have bow'd unto my father's God,
Although my brother Abel oft implores
That I would join with him in sacrifice:—
Why should I bow to thee?
Lucifer. Hast thou ne'er bowed
To Him?
Cain. Have I not said it?—need I say it?
Could not thy mighty knowledge teach thee that?
Lucifer. He who bows not to Him has bow'd to me!
Cain. But I will bend to neither.
Lucifer. Ne'er the less,
Thou art my worshipper: not worshipping
Him makes thee mine the same.
Cain. And what is that?
Lucifer. Thou'lt know here—and hereafter.
Cain. Let me but
Be taught the mystery of my being.
Lucifer. Follow
Where I will lead thee.
Cain. But I must retire
To till the earth—for I had promised——
Lucifer. What?
Cain. To cull some first-fruits.
Lucifer. Why?
Cain. To offer up
With Abel on an altar.
Lucifer. Saidst thou not
Thou ne'er hadst bent to Him who made thee?
Cain. Yes—
But Abel's earnest prayer has wrought upon me;
The offering is more his than mine—and Adah——

Lucifer. Why dost thou hesitate?
Cain. She is my sister,
Born on the same day, of the same womb: and
She wrung from me, with tears, this promise;
Rather than see her weep, I would, methinks,
Bear all—and worship aught.
Lucifer. Then follow me!
Cain. I will.

Enter ADAH.

Adah. My brother, I have come for thee;
It is our hour of rest and joy—and we
Have less without thee. Thou hast labor'd not
This morn; but I have done thy task: the fruits
Are ripe, and glowing as the light which ripens:
Come away.
Cain. Seest thou not?
Adah. I see an angel:
We have seen many: will he share our hour
Of rest?—he is welcome.
Cain. But he is not like
The angels we have seen.
Adah. Are there, then, others?
But he is welcome, as they were: they deign'd
To be our guests—will he?
Cain (to Lucifer). Wilt thou?
Lucifer. I ask
Thee to be mine.
Cain. I must away with him.
Adah. And leave us?
Cain. Ay.
Adah. And *me?*
Cain. Beloved Adah!
Adah. Let me go with thee.
Lucifer. No, she must not.
Adah. Who
Art thou that steppest between heart and heart?
Cain. He is a god.
Adah. How know'st thou?
Cain. He speaks like
A god.
Adah. So did the serpent, and it lied.
Lucifer. Thou errest, Adah!—was not the tree that
Of knowledge?
Adah. Ay—to our eternal sorrow.
Lucifer. And yet that grief is knowledge—so he lied not:
And if he did betray you, 'twas with truth;
And truth in its own essence cannot be
But good.
Adah. But all we know of it has gather'd
Evil on ill: expulsion from our home,
And dread, and toil, and sweat, and heaviness;
Remorse of that which was—and hope of that
Which cometh not. Cain! walk not with this spirit.
Bear with what we have borne, and love me—I
Love thee.

Lucifer. More than thy mother, and thy sire?
Adah. I do. Is that a sin, too?
Lucifer. No, not yet:
It one day will be in your children.
Adah. What!
Must not my daughter love her brother Enoch?
Lucifer. Not as thou lovest Cain.
Adah. Oh! my God!
Shall they not love, and bring forth things that love
Out of their love? have they not drawn their milk
Out of this bosom? was not he, their father,
Born of the same sole womb, in the same hour
With me? Did we not love each other? and
In multiplying our being multiply
Things which will love each other as we love
Them?—And as I love thee, my Cain! go not
Forth with this spirit; he is not of ours.
Lucifer. The sin I speak of is not of my making,
And cannot be a sin in you—whate'er
It seem in those who will replace ye in
Mortality.
Adah. What is the sin which is not
Sin in itself? Can circumstance make sin
Or virtue?—if it doth, we are the slaves
Of——
Lucifer. Higher things than ye are slaves: and higher
Than them or ye would be so, did they not
Prefer an independency of torture
To the smooth agonies of adulation,
In hymns and harpings, and self-seeking prayers,
To that which is omnipotent, because
It is omnipotent, and not from love,
But terror and self-hope.
Adah. Omnipotence
Must be all goodness.
Lucifer. Was it so in Eden?
Adah. Fiend! tempt me not with beauty; thou art fairer
Than was the serpent, and as false.
Lucifer. As true.
Ask Eve, your mother: bears she not the knowledge
Of good and evil?
Adah. Oh, my mother! thou
Hast pluck'd a fruit more fatal to thine offspring
Than to thyself; thou at the least hast pass'd
Thy youth in Paradise, in innocent
And happy intercourse with happy spirits:
But we, thy children, ignorant of Eden,
Are girt about by demons, who assume
The words of God, and tempt us with our own
Dissatisfied and curious thoughts—as thou
Wert work'd on by the snake, in thy most flush'd
And heedless, harmless wantonness of bliss.
I cannot answer this immortal thing
Which stands before me; I cannot abhor him;
I look upon him with a pleasing fear,
And yet I fly not from him: in his eye

There is a fastening attraction which
Fixes my fluttering eyes on his; my heart
Beats quick; he awes me, and yet draws me near,
Nearer, and nearer:—Cain—Cain—save me from him!
Cain. What dreads my Adah? This is no ill spirit.
Adah. He is not God—nor God's: I have beheld
The cherubs and the seraphs; he looks not
Like them.
Cain. But there are spirits loftier still—
The archangels.
Lucifer. And still loftier than the archangels.
Adah. Ay—but not blessed.
Lucifer. If the blessedness
Consists in slavery—no.
Adah. I have heard it said,
The seraphs *love most*—cherubim *know most*—
And this should be a cherub—since he loves not.
Lucifer. And if the higher knowledge quenches love,
What must *he be* you cannot love when known?
Since the all-knowing cherubim love least,
The seraphs' love can be but ignorance:
That they are not compatible, the doom
Of thy fond parents, for their daring, proves.
Choose betwixt love and knowledge—since there is
No other choice: your sire hath chosen already;
His worship is but fear.
Adah. Oh, Cain! choose love.
Cain. For thee, my Adah, I choose not—it was
Born with me—but I love nought else.
Adah. Our parents?
Cain. Did they love us when they snatch'd from the tree
That which hath driven us all from Paradise?
Adah. We were not born then—and if we had been,
Should we not love them and our children, Cain?
Cain. My little Enoch! and his lisping sister!
Could I but deem them happy, I would half
Forget——but it can never be forgotten
Through twice a thousand generations! never
Shall men love the remembrance of the man
Who sow'd the seed of evil and mankind
In the same hour! They pluck'd the tree of science
And sin—and, not content with their own sorrow,
Begot *me—thee*—and all the few that are,
And all the unnumber'd and innumerable
Multitudes, millions, myriads, which may be,
To inherit agonies accumulated
By ages!—and *I* must be sire of such things!
Thy beauty and thy love—my love and joy,
The rapturous moment and the placid hour,
All we love in our children and each other,
But lead them and ourselves through many years
Of sin and pain—or few, but still of sorrow,
Intercheck'd with an instant of brief pleasure,
To Death—the unknown! Methinks the tree of knowledge
Hath not fulfill'd its promise:—if they sinn'd,
At least they ought to have known all things that are

Of knowledge—and the mystery of death.
What do they know?—that they are miserable.
What need of snakes and fruits to teach us that?
Adah. I am not wretched, Cain, and if thou
Wert happy——
Cain. Be thou happy, then, alone—
I will have nought to do with happiness
Which humbles me and mine.
Adah. Alone I could not,
Nor *would* be happy: but with those around us,
I think I could be so, despite of death,
Which, as I know it not, I dread not, though
It seems an awful shadow—if I may
Judge from what I have heard.
Lucifer. And thou couldst not
Alone, thou say'st, be happy?
Adah. Alone! Oh, my God!
Who could be happy and alone, or good?
To me my solitude seems sin; unless
When I think how soon I shall see my brother,
His brother, and our children, and our parents.
Lucifer. Yet thy God is alone, and is He happy?
Lonely, and good?
Adah. He is not so; He hath
The angels and the mortals to make happy,
And thus becomes so in diffusing joy.
What else can joy be, but the spreading joy?
Lucifer. Ask of your sire, the exile fresh from Eden;
Or of his first-born son: ask your own heart;
It is not tranquil.
Adah. Alas! no! and you—
Are you of heaven?
Lucifer. If I am not, inquire
The cause of this all-spreading happiness
(Which you proclaim) of the all-great and good
Maker of life and living things; it is
His secret, and He keeps it. *We* must bear,
And some of us resist, and both in vain,
His seraphs say; but it is worth the trial,
Since better may not be without: there is
A wisdom in the spirit, which directs
To right, as in the dim blue air the eye
Of you, young mortals, lights at once upon
The star which watches, welcoming the morn.
Adah. It is a beautiful star; I love it for its beauty.
Lucifer. And why not adore?
Adah. Our father
Adores the Invisible only.
Lucifer. But the symbols
Of the Invisible are the loveliest
Of what is visible; and yon bright star
Is leader of the host of heaven.
Adah. Our father
Saith that he has beheld the God himself
Who made him and our mother.
Lucifer. Hast *thou* seen Him?

Adah. Yes—in His works.
Lucifer. But in His being?
Adah. No—
Save in my father, who is God's own image;
Or in His angels, who are like to thee—
And brighter, yet less beautiful and powerful
In seeming: as the silent sunny noon,
All light they look upon us; but thou seem'st
Like an ethereal night, where long white clouds
Streak the deep purple, and unnumber'd stars
Spangle the wonderful mysterious vault
With things that look as if they would be suns;
So beautiful, unnumber'd, and endearing,
Not dazzling, and yet drawing us to them,
They fill my eyes with tears, and so dost thou.
Thou seem'st unhappy: do not make us so,
And I will weep for thee.
Lucifer. Alas! those tears!
Couldst thou but know what oceans will be shed——
Adah. By me?
Lucifer. By all.
Adah. What all?
Lucifer. The million millions—
The myriad myriads—the all-peopled earth—
The unpeopled earth—and the o'er-peopled hell,
Of which thy bosom is the germ.
Adah. O Cain!
This spirit curseth us.
Cain. Let him say on;
Him will I follow.
Adah. Whither?
Lucifer. To a place
Whence he shall come back to thee in an hour;
But in that hour see things of many days.
Adah. How can that be?
Lucifer. Did not your Maker make
Out of old worlds this new one in a few days?
And cannot I, who aided in this work,
Show in an hour what He hath made in many,
Or hath destroyed in few?
Cain. Lead on.
Adah. Will he,
In sooth, return with an hour?
Lucifer. He shall.
With us acts are exempt from time, and we
Can crowd eternity into an hour,
Or stretch an hour into eternity:
We breathe not by a mortal measurement—
But that's a mystery. Cain, come on with me.
Adah. Will he return?
Lucifer. Ay, woman! he alone
Of mortals from that place (the first and last
Who shall return, save ONE)—shall come back to thee,
To make that silent and expectant world
As populous as this: at present there
Are few inhabitants.

Adah. Where dwellest thou?
Lucifer. Throughout all space. Where should I dwell? Where are
Thy God or Gods—there am I: all things are
Divided with me; life and death—and time—
Eternity—and heaven and earth—and that
Which is not heaven nor earth, but peopled with
Those who once peopled or shall people both—
These are my realms! So that I do divide
His, and possess a kingdom which is not
His. If I were not that which I have said,
Could I stand here? His angels are within
Your vision.
Adah. So they were when the fair serpent
Spoke with our mother first.
Lucifer. Cain! thou hast heard.
If thou dost long for knowledge, I can satiate
That thirst; nor ask thee to partake of fruits
Which shall deprive thee of a single good
The Conqueror has left thee. Follow me.
Cain. Spirit, I have said it.
[*Exeunt* LUCIFER *and* CAIN.
Adah (*follows, exclaiming*) Cain! my brother! Cain!

ACT II.

SCENE I.

The Abyss of Space.

Cain. I tread on air, and sink not; yet I fear
To sink.
Lucifer. Have faith in me, and thou shalt be
Borne on the air, of which I am the prince.
Cain. Can I do so without impiety?
Lucifer. Believe—and sink not! doubt—and perish! thus
Would run the edict of the other God,
Who names me demon to His angels; they
Echo the sound to miserable things,
Which, knowing nought beyond their shallow senses,
Worship the word which strikes their ear, and deem
Evil or good what is proclaim'd to them
In their abasement. I will have none such:
Worship or worship not, thou shalt behold
The worlds beyond thy little world, nor be
Amerced for doubts beyond thy little life,
With torture of *my* dooming. There will come
An hour, when, toss'd upon some water-drops,
A man shall say to a man, "Believe in me,
And walk the waters;" and the man shall walk
The billows and be safe. *I* will not say,
Believe in *me*, as a conditional creed
To save thee; but fly with me o'er the gulf
Of space an equal flight, and I will show
What thou dar'st not deny—the history
Of past, and present, and of future worlds.

Cain. Oh, god, or demon, or whate'er thou art,
Is yon our earth?
Lucifer. Dost thou not recognize
The dust which form'd your father?
Cain. Can it be?
Yon small blue circle, swinging in far ether,
With an inferior circlet near it still,
Which looks like that which lit our earthly night?
Is this our Paradise? Where are its walls,
And they who guard them?
Lucifer. Point me out the site
Of Paradise.
Cain. How should I? As we move
Like sunbeams onward, it grows small and smaller,
And as it waxes little, and then less,
Gathers a halo round it, like the light
Which shone the roundest of the stars, when I
Beheld them from the skirts of Paradise?
Methinks they both, as we recede from them,
Appear to join the innumerable stars
Which are around us; and, as we move on,
Increase their myriads.
Lucifer. And if there should be
Worlds greater than thine own, inhabited
By greater things, and they themselves far more
In number than the dust of thy dull earth,
Though multiplied to animated atoms,
All living, and all doom'd to death, and wretched,
What wouldst thou think?
Cain. I should be proud of thought
Which knew such things.
Lucifer. But if that high thought were
Link'd to a servile mass of matter, and,
Knowing such things, aspiring to such things,
And science still beyond them, were chain'd down
To the most gross and petty paltry wants,
All foul and fulsome, and the very best
Of thine enjoyments a sweet degradation,
A most enervating and filthy cheat
To lure thee on to the renewal of
Fresh souls and bodies, all foredoom'd to be
As frail, and few so happy——
Cain. Spirit! I
Know nought of death, save as a dreadful thing
Of which I have heard my parents speak, as of
A hideous heritage I owe to them
No less than life; a heritage not happy,
If I may judge, till now. But, spirit! if
It be as thou hast said (and I within
Feel the prophetic torture of its truth),
Here let me die: for to give birth to those
Who can but suffer many years, and die,
Methinks is merely propagating death,
And multiplying murder.
Lucifer. Thou canst not
All die—there is what must survive.

Cain. The Other
Spake not of this unto my father, when
He shut him forth from Paradise, with death
Written upon his forehead. But at least
Let what is mortal of me perish, that
I may be in the rest as angels are.
Lucifer. I am angelic: wouldst thou be as I am?
Cain. I know not what thou art: I see thy power,
And see thou show'st me things beyond *my* power,
Beyond all power of my born faculties,
Although inferior still to my desires
And my conceptions.
Lucifer. What are they which dwell
So humbly in their pride, as to sojourn
With worms in clay?
Cain. And what art thou who dwellest
So haughtily in spirit, and canst range
Nature and immortality—and yet
Seem'st sorrowful?
Lucifer. I seem that which I am;
And therefore do I ask of thee, if thou
Wouldst be immortal?
Cain. Thou hast said, I must be
Immortal in despite of me. I knew not
This until lately—but since it must be,
Let me, or happy or unhappy, learn
To anticipate my immortality.
Lucifer. Thou didst before I came upon thee.
Cain. How?
Lucifer. By suffering.
Cain. And must torture be immortal?
Lucifer. We and thy sons will try. But now, behold!
Is it not glorious?
Cain. Oh, thou beautiful
And unimaginable ether! and
Ye multiplying masses of increased
And still increasing lights! what are ye? what
Is this blue wilderness of interminable
Air, where ye roll along, as I have seen
The leaves along the limpid streams of Eden?
Is your course measured for ye? Or do ye
Sweep on in your unbounded revelry
Through an aërial universe of endless
Expansion—at which my soul aches to think—
Intoxicated with eternity?
O God! O Gods! or whatsoe'er ye are!
How beautiful ye are! how beautiful
Your works, or accidents, or whatsoe'er
They may be! Let me die, as atoms die,
(If that they die,) or know ye in your might
And knowledge! My thoughts are not in this hour
Unworthy what I see, though my dust is;
Spirit! let me expire, or see them nearer.
Lucifer. Art thou not nearer? look back to thine earth!
Cain. Where is it? I see nothing save a mass
Of most innumerable lights.

Lucifer. Look there!
Cain. I cannot see it.
Lucifer. Yet it sparkles still.
Cain. That!—yonder!
Lucifer. Yea.
Cain. And wilt thou tell me so?
Why, I have seen the fire-flies and fire-worms
Sprinkle the dusky groves and the green banks
In the dim twilight, brighter than yon world
Which bears them.
Lucifer. Thou hast seen both worms and worlds,
Each bright and sparkling—what dost think of them?
Cain. That they are beautiful in their own sphere,
And that the night, which makes both beautiful,
The little shining fire-fly in its flight,
And the immortal star in its great course,
Must both be guided.
Lucifer. But by whom or what?
Cain. Show me.
Lucifer. Dar'st thou behold?
Cain. How know I what
I *dare* behold? As yet, thou hast shown nought
I dare not gaze on further.
Lucifer. On, then, with me.
Wouldst thou behold things mortal or immortal?
Cain. Why, what are things?
Lucifer. *Both* partly: but what doth
Sit next thy heart?
Cain. The things I see.
Lucifer. But what
Sate nearest it?
Cain. The things I have not seen,
Nor ever shall—the mysteries of death.
Lucifer. What, if I show to thee things which have died,
As I have shown thee much which cannot die?
Cain. Do so.
Lucifer. Away, then! on our mighty wings.
Cain. Oh! how we cleave the blue! The stars fade from us!
The earth! where is my earth? Let me look on it,
For I was made of it.
Lucifer. 'Tis now beyond thee,
Less, in the universe, than thou in it;
Yet deem not that thou canst escape it: thou
Shalt soon return to earth, and all its dust:
'Tis part of thy eternity, and mine.
Cain. Where dost thou lead me?
Lucifer. To what was before thee!
The phantasm of the world; of which thy world
Is but the wreck.
Cain. What! is it not then new?
Lucifer. No more than life is; and that was ere thou
Or *I* were, or the things which seem to us
Greater than either: many things will have
No end; and some, which would pretend to have
Had no beginning, have had one as mean
As thou; and mightier things have been extinct

To make way for much meaner than we can
Surmise; for *moments* only and the *space*
Have been and must be all *unchangeable.*
But changes make not death, except to clay:
But thou art clay,—and canst but comprehend
That which was clay, and such thou shalt behold.
Cain. Clay, spirit! what thou wilt, I can survey.
Lucifer. Away, then!
Cain. But the lights fade from me fast,
And some till now grew larger as we approach'd,
And wore the look of worlds.
Lucifer. And such they are.
Cain. And Edens in them?
Lucifer. It may be.
Cain. And men?
Lucifer. Yea, or things higher.
Cain. Ay? and serpents too?
Lucifer. Wouldst thou have men without them? must no reptiles
Breathe save the erect ones?
Cain. How the lights recede;
Where fly we?
Lucifer. To the world of phantoms, which
Are beings past, and shadows still to come.
Cain. But it grows dark and dark—the stars are gone!
Lucifer. And yet thou seest.
Cain. 'Tis a fearful light!
No sun, no moon, no lights innumerable.
The very blue of the empurpled night
Fades to a dreary twilight, yet I see
Huge dusky masses: but unlike the worlds
We were approaching, which, begirt with light,
Seem'd full of life even when their atmosphere
Of light gave way, and show'd them taking shapes
Unequal, of deep valleys and vast mountains;
And some emitting sparks, and some displaying
Enormous liquid plains, and some begirt
With luminous belts, and floating moons, which took,
Like them, the features of fair earth:—instead,
All here seems dark and dreadful.
Lucifer. But distinct.
Thou seekest to behold death, and dead things?
Cain. I seek it not: but as I know there are
Such, and that my sire's sin makes him and me,
And all that we inherit, liable
To such, I would behold at once, what I
Must one day see perforce.
Lucifer. Behold!
Cain. 'Tis darkness.
Lucifer. And so it shall be ever; but we will
Unfold its gates!
Cain. Enormous vapors roll
Apart—what's this?
Lucifer. Enter!
Cain. Can I return?

Lucifer. Return! be sure: how else should death be peopled?
Its present realm is thin to what it will be,
Through thee and thine.
Cain. The clouds still open wide
And wider, and make widening circles round us.
Lucifer. Advance!
Cain. And thou!
Lucifer. Fear not—without me thou
Couldst not have gone beyond thy world. On! on!
[*They disappear through the clouds*

SCENE II.

Hades.

Enter LUCIFER *and* CAIN.

Cain. How silent and how vast are these dim worlds!
For they seem more than one, and yet more peopled
Than the huge brilliant luminous orbs which swung
So thickly in the upper air, that I
Had deem'd them rather the bright populace
Of some all unimaginable heaven,
Than things to be inhabited themselves,
But that on drawing near them I beheld
Their swelling into palpable immensity
Of matter, which seem'd made for life to dwell on,
Rather than life itself. But here, all is
So shadowy and so full of twilight, that
It speaks of a day past.
Lucifer. It is the realm
Of death.—Wouldst have it present?
Cain. Till I know
That which it really is, I cannot answer.
But if it be as I have heard my father
Deal out in his long homilies, 'tis a thing—
O God! I dare not think on't! Cursed be
He who invented life that leads to death!
Or the dull mass of life, that, being life,
Could not retain, but needs must forfeit it—
Even for the innocent!
Lucifer. Dost thou curse thy father!
Cain. Cursed he not me in giving me my birth?
Cursed he not me before my birth, in daring
To pluck the fruit forbidden?
Lucifer. Thou say'st well:
The curse is mutual 'twixt thy sire and thee—
But for thy sons and brother?
Cain. Let them share it
With me, their sire and brother? What else is
Bequeath'd to me? I leave them my inheritance.
Oh, ye interminable gloomy realms
Of swimming shadows and enormous shapes,
Some fully shown, some indistinct, and all
Mighty and melancholy—what are ye?
Live ye, or have ye lived?
Lucifer. Somewhat of both.

Cain. Then what is death?
Lucifer. What? Hath not He who made ye
Said 'tis another life?
Cain. Till now He hath
Said nothing, save that all shall die.
Lucifer. Perhaps
He one day will unfold that further secret.
Cain. Happy the day!
Lucifer. Yes; happy! when unfolded
Through agonies unspeakable, and clogg'd
With agonies eternal, to innumerable
Yet unborn myriads of unconscious atoms,
All to be animated for this only!
Cain. What are these mighty phantoms which I see
Floating around me?—They wear not the form
Of the intelligences I have seen
Round our regretted and uncnter'd Eden,
Nor wear the form of man as I have view'd it
In Adam's, and in Abel's, and in mine,
Nor in my sister-bride's, nor in my children's:
And yet they have an aspect, which, though not
Of men nor angels, looks like something, which
If not the last, rose higher than the first,
Haughty, and high, and beautiful, and full
Of seeming strength, but of inexplicable
Shape; for I never saw such. They bear not
The wing of seraph, nor the face of man,
Nor form of mightiest brute, nor aught that is
Now breathing; mighty yet and beautiful
As the most beautiful and mighty which
Live, and yet so unlike them, that I scarce
Can call them living.
Lucifer. Yet they lived.
Cain. Where?
Lucifer. Where
Thou livest.
Cain. When?
Lucifer. On what thou callest earth
They did inhabit.
Cain. Adam is the first.
Lucifer. Of thine, I grant thee—but too mean to be
The last of these.
Cain. And what are they?
Lucifer. That which
Thou shalt be.
Cain. But what *were* they?
Lucifer. Living, high,
Intelligent, good, great, and glorious things,
As much superior unto all thy sire,
Adam, could e'er have been in Eden, as
The sixty-thousandth generation shall be,
In its dull damp degeneracy, to
Thee and thy son;—and how weak they are, judge
By thy own flesh.
Cain. Ah me! and did *they* perish?

Lucifer. Yes, from their earth, as thou wilt fade from thine.
Cain. But was *mine* theirs?
Lucifer. It was.
Cain. But not as now.
It is too little and too lowly to
Sustain such creatures.
Lucifer. True, it was more glorious.
Cain. And wherefore did it fall?
Lucifer. Ask Him who fells.
Cain. But how?
Lucifer. By a most crushing and inexorable
Destruction and disorder of the elements,
Which struck a world to chaos, as a chaos
Subsiding has struck out a world: such things,
Though rare in time, are frequent in eternity,—
Pass on, and gaze upon the past.
Cain. 'Tis awful!
Lucifer. And true. Behold these phantoms! they were once
Material as thou art.
Cain. And must I be
Like them?
Lucifer. Let Him who made thee answer that.
I show thee what thy predecessors are,
And what they *were* thou feelest, in degree
Inferior as thy petty feelings and
Thy pettier portion of the immortal part
Of high intelligence and earthly strength.
What ye in common have with what they had
Is life, and what ye *shall* have—death: the rest
Of your poor attributes is such as suits
Reptiles engender'd out of the subsiding
Slime of a mighty universe, crush'd into
A scarcely-yet shaped planet, peopled with
Things whose enjoyment was to be in blindness—
A Paradise of Ignorance, from which
Knowledge was barr'd as poison. But behold
What these superior beings are or were;
Or, if it irk thee, turn thee back and till
The earth, thy task—I'll waft thee there in safety.
Cain. No: I'll stay here.
Lucifer. How long?
Cain. For ever! Since
I must one day return here from the earth,
I rather would remain; I am sick of all
That dust has shown me—let me dwell in shadows.
Lucifer. It cannot be: thou now beholdest as
A vision that which is reality.
To make thyself fit for this dwelling, thou
Must pass through what the things thou seest have pass'd—
The gates of death.
Cain. By what gate have we enter'd
Even now?
Lucifer. By mine! But, plighted to return,
My spirit buoys thee up to breathe in regions
Where all is breathless save thyself. Gaze on;

But do not think to dwell here till thine hour
Is come.
Cain. And these, too; can they ne'er repass
To earth again?
Lucifer. *Their* earth is gone for ever—
So changed by its convulsion, they would not
Be conscious to a single present spot
Of its new scarcely harden'd surface—'twas—
Oh, what a beautiful world it *was!*
Cain. And is.
It is not with the earth, though I must till it,
I feel at war, but that I may not profit
By what it bears of beautiful untoiling,
Nor gratify my thousand swelling thoughts
With knowledge, nor allay my thousand fears
Of death and life.
Lucifer. What thy world is, thou seest,
But canst not comprehend the shadow of
That which it was.
Cain. And those enormous creatures,
Phantoms inferior in intelligence
(At least so seeming) to the things we have pass'd,
Resembling somewhat the wild habitants
Of the deep woods of earth, the hugest which
Roar nightly in the forest, but tenfold
In magnitude and terror; taller than
The cherub-guarded walls of Eden, with
Eyes flashing like the fiery swords which fence them,
And tusks projecting like the trees stripp'd of
Their bark and branches—what were they?
Lucifer. That which
The Mammoth is in thy world;—but these lie
By myriads undern ath its surface.
Cain. But
None on it?
Lucifer. No: for thy frail race to war
With them would render the curse on it useless—
'Twould be destroy'd so early.
Cain. But why *war?*
Lucifer. You have forgotten the denunciation
Which drove your race from Eden—war with all things,
And death to all things, and disease to most things,
And pangs, and bitterness; these were the fruits
Of the forbidden tree.
Cain. But animals—
Did they, too, eat of it, that they must die?
Lucifer. Your Maker told ye, *they* were made for you,
As you for Him.—You would not have their doom
Superior to your own? Had Adam not
Fallen, all had stood.
Cain. Alas! the hopeless wretches!
They too must share my sire's fate, like his sons;
Like them, too, without having shared the apple;
Like them, too, without the so dear-bought *knowledge!*
It was a lying tree—for we *know* nothing.

At least it *promised knowledge* at the *price*
Of death—but *knowledge* still: but what *knows* man?
Lucifer. It may be death leads to the *highest* knowledge;
And being of all things the sole thing certain,
At least leads to the *surest* science: therefore
The tree was true, though deadly.
Cain. These dim realms!
I see them, but I know them not.
Lucifer. Because
Thy hour is yet afar, and matter cannot
Comprehend spirit wholly—but 'tis something
To know there are such realms.
Cain. We knew already
That there was death.
Lucifer. But not what was beyond it.
Cain. Nor know I now.
Lucifer. Thou knowest that there is
A state, and many states beyond thine own—
And this thou knewest not this morn.
Cain. But all
Seems dim and shadowy.
Lucifer. Be content; it will
Seem clearer to thine immortality.
Cain. And yon immeasurable liquid space
Of glorious azure which floats on beyond us,
Which looks like water, and which I should deem
The river which flows out of Paradise
Past my own dwelling, but that it is bankless
And boundless, and of an ethereal hue—
What is it?
Lucifer. There is still some such on earth,
Although inferior, and thy children shall
Dwell near it—'tis the phantasm of an ocean.
Cain. 'Tis like another world; a liquid sun—
And those inordinate creatures sporting o'er
Its shining surface?
Lucifer. Are its inhabitants;
The past leviathans.
Cain. And yon immense
Serpent, which rears its dripping mane and vasty
Head ten times higher than the haughtiest cedar
Forth from the abyss, looking as he could coil
Himself around the orbs we lately look'd on—
Is he not of the kind which bask'd beneath
The tree in Eden?
Lucifer. Eve, thy mother, best
Can tell what shape of serpent tempted her.
Cain. This seems too terrible. No doubt the other
Had more of beauty.
Lucifer. Hast thou ne'er beheld him?
Cain. Many of the same kind (at least so call'd),
But never that precisely which persuaded
The fatal fruit, nor even of the same aspect.
Lucifer. Your father saw him not?
Cain. No; 'twas my mother
Who tempted him—she tempted by the serpent.

Lucifer. Good man! whene'er thy wife, or thy sons' wives,
Tempt thee or them to aught that 's new or strange,
Be sure thou seest first who hath tempted *them*.
Cain. Thy precept comes too late: there is no more
For serpents to tempt woman to.
Lucifer. But there
Are some things still which woman may tempt man to,
And man tempt woman:—let thy sons look to it!
My counsel is a kind one: for 'tis even
Given chiefly at my own expense: 'tis true,
'Twill not be follow'd, so there 's little lost.
Cain. I understand not this.
Lucifer. The happier thou!—
Thy world and thou are still too young! Thou thinkest
Thyself most wicked and unhappy: is it
Not so?
Cain. For crime, I know not; but for pain,
I have felt much.
Lucifer. First-born of the first man!
Thy present state of sin—and thou art evil,
Of sorrow—and thou sufferest, are both Eden
In all its innocence compared to what
Thou shortly may'st be; and that state again
In its redoubled wretchedness, a Paradise
To what thy sons' sons' sons, accumulating
In generations like to dust (which they
In fact but add to), shall endure and do.—
Now let us back to earth!
Cain. And wherefore didst thou
Lead me here only to inform me this?
Lucifer. Was not thy quest for knowledge?
Cain. Yes; as being
The road to happiness.
Lucifer. If truth be so,
Thou hast it.
Cain. Then my father's God did well
When he prohibited the fatal tree.
Lucifer. But had done better in not planting it.
But ignorance of evil doth not save
From evil: it must still roll on the same,
A part of all things.
Cain. Not of all things. No:
I'll not believe it—for I thirst for good.
Lucifer. And who and what doth not? *Who* covets evil
For its own bitter sake?—*None*—nothing! 'tis
The leaven of all life, and lifelessness.
Cain. Within those glorious orbs which we behold,
Distant, and dazzling, and innumerable,
Ere we came down into this phantom realm,
I'll cannot come: they are too beautiful.
Lucifer. Thou hast seen them from afar—
Cain. And what of that?
Distance can but diminish glory—they,
When nearer, must be more ineffable.
Lucifer. Approach the things of earth most beautiful,
And judge their beauty near.

Cain. I have done this—
The loveliest thing I know is loveliest nearest.
Lucifer. Then there must be delusion.—What is that,
Which being nearest to thine eyes is still
More beautiful than beauteous things remote?
Cain. My sister Adah.—All the stars of heaven,
The deep blue noon of night, lit by an orb
Which looks a spirit, or a spirit's world—
The hues of twilight—the sun's gorgeous coming—
His setting indescribable, which fills
My eyes with pleasant tears as I behold
Him sink, and feel my heart float softly with him
Along that western paradise of clouds—
The forest shade—the green bough—the bird's voice—
The vesper bird's, which seems to sing of love,
And mingles with the song of cherubim,
As the day closes over Eden's walls;—
All these are nothing, to my eyes and heart,
Like Adah's face: I turn from earth and heaven
To gaze on it.
Lucifer. 'Tis fair as frail mortality,
In the first dawn and bloom of young creation,
And earliest embraces of earth's parents,
Can make its offspring; still it is delusion.
Cain. You think so, being not her brother.
Lucifer. Mortal!
My brotherhood's with those who have no children.
Cain. Then thou canst have no fellowship with us.
Lucifer. It may be that thine own shall be for me.
But if thou dost possess a beautiful
Being beyond all beauty in thine eyes,
Why art thou wretched?
Cain. Why do I exist?
Why art *thou* wretched? why are all things so?
Even He who made us must be, as the maker
Of things unhappy! To produce destruction
Can surely never be the task of joy;
And yet my sire says He's omnipotent:
Then why is evil—He being good? I ask'd
This question of my father; and he said,
Because this evil only was the path
To good. Strange good, that must arise from out
Its deadly opposite. I lately saw
A lamb stung by a reptile: the poor suckling
Lay foaming on the earth, beneath the vain
And piteous bleating of its restless dam;
My father pluck'd some herbs, and laid them to
The wound; and by degrees the helpless wretch
Resumed its careless life, and rose to drain
The mother's milk, who o'er it tremulous
Stood licking its reviving limbs with joy.
Behold, my son! said Adam, how from evil
Springs good!
Lucifer. What didst thou answer?
Cain. Nothing; for
He is my father: but I thought, that 'twere

A better portion for the animal
Never to have been *stung at all*, than to
Purchase renewal of its little life
With agonies unutterable, though
Dispell'd by antidotes.
Lucifer. But as thou said'st
Of all beloved things thou lovest her
Who shared thy mother's milk, and giveth hers
Unto thy children——
Cain. Most assuredly:
What should I be without her?
Lucifer. What am I?
Cain. Dost thou love nothing?
Lucifer. What does thy God love?
Cain. All things, my father says; but I confess
I see it not in their allotment here.
Lucifer. And, therefore, thou canst not see if *I* love
Or no, except some vast and general purpose,
To which particular things must melt like snows.
Cain. Snows! what are they?
Lucifer. Be happier in not knowing
What thy remoter offspring must encounter;
But bask beneath the clime which knows no winter!
Cain. But dost thou not love something like thyself?
Lucifer. And dost thou love *thyself?*
Cain. Yes, but love more
What makes my feelings more endurable,
And is more than myself, because I love it.
Lucifer. Thou lovest it, because 'tis beautiful,
As was the apple in thy mother's eye;
And when it ceases to be so, thy love
Will cease, like any other appetite.
Cain. Cease to be beautiful! how can that be?
Lucifer. With time.
Cain. But time has pass'd, and hitherto
Even Adam and my mother both are fair:
Not fair like Adah and the seraphim—
But very fair.
Lucifer. All that must pass away
In them and her.
Cain. I'm sorry for it, but
Cannot conceive my love for her the less.
And when her beauty disappears, methinks
He who creates all beauty will lose more
Than me in seeing perish such a work.
Lucifer. I pity thee who lovest what must perish.
Cain. And I thee, who lov'st nothing.
Lucifer. And thy brother—
Sits he not near thy heart?
Cain. Why should he not?
Lucifer. Thy father loves him well—so does thy God.
Cain. And so do I.
Lucifer. 'Tis well and meekly done.
Cain. Meekly!
Lucifer. He is the second born of flesh,
And is his mother's favorite.

Cain. Let him keep
Her favor, since the serpent was the first
To win it.
Lucifer. And his father's?
Cain. What is that
To me? should I not love that which all love?
Lucifer. And the Jehovah—the indulgent Lord,
And bounteous planter of barr'd Paradise—
He, too, looks smilingly on Abel.
Cain. I
Ne'er saw Him, and I know not if He smiles.
Lucifer. But you have seen His angels?
Cain. Rarely.
Lucifer. But
Sufficiently to see they love your brother:
His sacrifices are acceptable.
Cain. So be they! wherefore speak to me of this?
Lucifer. Because thou hast thought of this ere now.
Cain. And if
I *have* thought, why recall a thought that——(*he pauses, as agitated*)—Spirit!
Here we are in *thy* world: speak not of *mine*.
Thou hast shown me wonders; thou hast shown me those
Mighty pre-Adamites who walk'd the earth
Of which ours is the wreck; thou hast pointed out
Myriads of starry worlds, of which our own
Is the dim and remote companion, in
Infinity of life: thou hast shown me shadows
Of that existence with the dreaded name
Which my sire brought us—Death; thou hast shown me much—
But not all: show me where Jehovah dwells,
In His especial Paradise—or *thine*:
Where is it?
Lucifer. *Here*, and o'er all space.
Cain. But ye
Have some allotted dwelling—as all things;
Clay has its earth, and other worlds their tenants;
All temporary breathing creatures their
Peculiar element; and things which have
Long ceased to breathe *our* breath, have theirs, thou say'st;
And the Jehovah and thyself have thine—
Ye do not dwell together?
Lucifer. No, we reign
Together; but our dwellings are asunder.
Cain. Would there were only one of ye! Perchance
An unity of purpose might make union
In elements which seem now jarr'd in storms.
How came ye, being spirits, wise and infinite,
To separate? Are ye not as brethren in
Your essence, and your nature, and your glory?
Lucifer. Art thou not Abel's brother?
Cain. We are brethren,
And so we shall remain; but were it not so,
Is spirit like to flesh? can it fall out?
Infinity with Immortality?

Jarring and turning space to misery—
For what?
Lucifer. To reign.
Cain. Did ye not tell me that
Ye are both eternal?
Lucifer. Yea!
Cain. And what I have seen,
Yon blue immensity, is boundless?
Lucifer. Ay.
Cain. And cannot ye both *reign* then?—is there not
Enough?—why should ye differ?
Lucifer. We *both* reign.
Cain. But one of you makes evil.
Lucifer. Which?
Cain. Thou! for
If thou canst do man good, why dost thou not?
Lucifer. And why not He who made? *I* made ye not:
Ye are *His* creatures, and not mine.
Cain. Then leave us
His creatures, as thou say'st we are, or show me
Thy dwelling, or His dwelling.
Lucifer. I could show thee
Both; but the time will come thou shalt see one
Of them for evermore.
Cain. And why not now?
Lucifer. Thy human mind hath scarcely grasp to gather
The little I have shown thee into calm
And clear thought; and thou wouldst go on aspiring
To the great double Mysteries! the *two Principles!*
And gaze upon them on their secret thrones!
Dust! limit thy ambition; for to see
Either of these, would be for thee to perish!
Cain. And let me perish, so I see them!
Lucifer. There
The son of her who snatch'd the apple spake!
But thou wouldst only perish, and not see them;
That sight is for the other state.
Cain. Of death?
Lucifer. That is the prelude.
Cain. Then I dread it less,
Now that I know it leads to something definite.
Lucifer. And now I will convey thee to thy world,
Where thou shalt multiply the race of Adam,
Eat, drink, toil, tremble, laugh, weep, sleep, and die.
Cain. And to what end have I beheld these things
Which thou hast shown me?
Lucifer. Didst thou not require
Knowledge? And have I not, in what I show'd,
Taught thee to know thyself?
Cain. Alas! I seem
Nothing.
Lucifer. And this should be the human sum
Of knowledge, to know mortal nature's nothingness:
Bequeath that science to thy children, and
'Twill spare them many tortures.
Cain. Haughty spirit!

Thou speak'st it proudly; but thyself, though proud,
Hast a superior.
Lucifer. No! by heaven, which He
Holds, and the abyss, and the immensity
Of worlds and life, which I hold with Him—No!
I have a victor—true; but no superior.
Homage He has from all—but none from me:
I battle it against Him, as I battled
In highest heaven. Through all eternity,
And the unfathomable gulfs of Hades,
And the interminable realms of space,
And the infinity of endless ages,
All, all, will I dispute! And world by world,
And star by star, and universe by universe,
Shall tremble in the balance, till the great
Conflict shall cease, if ever it shall cease,
Which it ne'er shall, till He or I be quench'd!
And what can quench our immortality,
Or mutual and irrevocable hate?
He as a conqueror will call the conquer'd
Evil; but what will be the *good* He gives?
Were I the victor, *His* works would be deem'd
The only evil ones. And you, ye new
And scarce-born mortals, what have been His gifts
To you already, in your little world?
Cain. But few! and some of those but bitter.
Lucifer. Back
With me, then, to thine earth, and try the rest
Of His celestial boons to you and yours.
Evil and good are things in their own essence,
And not made good or evil by the giver;
But if He gives you good—so call Him; if
Evil springs from *Him*, do not name it *mine*,
Till ye know better its true fount; and judge
Not by words, though of spirits, but the fruits
Of your existence, such as it must be.
One good gift has the fatal apple given—
Your *reason*:—let it not be over-sway'd
By tyrannous threats to force you into faith
'Gainst all external sense and inward feeling:
Think and endure—and form an inner world
In your own bosom—where the outward fails;
So shall you nearer be the spiritual
Nature, and war triumphant with your own. [*They disappear.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

The Earth near Eden, as in Act I.

Enter CAIN *and* ADAH.

Adah. Hush! tread softly, Cain.
Cain. I will; but wherefore?
Adah. Our little Enoch sleeps upon yon bed
Of leaves, beneath the cypress.

Cain. Cypress! 'tis
A gloomy tree, which looks as if it mourn'd
O'er what it shadows; wherefore didst thou choose it
For our child's canopy?
Adah. Because its branches
Shut out the sun like night, and therefore seem'd
Fitting to shadow slumber.
Cain. Ay, the last—
And longest; but no matter—lead me to him.
[*They go up to the child.*
How lovely he appears! his little cheeks,
In their pure incarnation, vying with
The rose leaves strewn beneath them.
Adah. And his lips, too,
How beautifully parted! No; you shall not
Kiss him, at least not now: he will awake soon—
His hour of mid-day rest is nearly over;
But it were pity to disturb him till
'Tis closed.
Cain. You have said well; I will contain
My heart till then. He smiles, and sleeps!—Sleep on
And smile, thou little, young inheritor
Of a world scarce less young: sleep on, and smile!
Thine are the hours and days when both are cheering
And innocent! *thou* hast not pluck'd the fruit—
Thou know'st not thou art naked! Must the time
Come thou shalt be amerced for sins unknown,
Which were not mine nor thine? But now sleep on!
His cheeks are reddening into deeper smiles,
And shining lids are trembling o'er his long
Lashes, dark as the cypress which waves o'er them;
Half open, from beneath them the clear blue
Laughs out, although in slumber. He must dream—
Of what? Of Paradise!—Ay! dream of it,
My disinherited boy! 'Tis but a dream;
For never more thyself, thy sons, nor fathers,
Shall walk in that forbidden place of joy!
Adah. Dear Cain! Nay, do not whisper o'er our son
Such melancholy yearnings o'er the past:
Why wilt thou always mourn for Paradise?
Can we not make another?
Cain. Where?
Adah. Here, or
Where'er thou wilt: where'er thou art, I feel not
The want of this so much regretted Eden.
Have I not thee, our boy, our sire, and brother,
And Zillah—our sweet sister, and our Eve,
To whom we owe so much besides our birth?
Cain. Yes—death, too, is amongst the debts we owe her.
Adah. Cain! that proud spirit, who withdrew thee hence,
Hath sadden'd thine still deeper. I had hoped
The promised wonders which thou hast beheld,
Visions, thou say'st, of past and present worlds,
Would have composed thy mind into the calm
Of a contented knowledge; but I see
Thy guide hath done thee evil: still I thank him,

And can forgive him all, that he so soon
Hath given thee back to us.
Cain. So soon?
Adah. 'Tis scarcely
Two hours since ye departed: two *long* hours
To *me*, but only *hours* upon the sun.
Cain. And yet I have approach'd that sun, and seen
Worlds which he once shone on, and never more
Shall light; and worlds he never lit: methought
Years had roll'd o'er my absence.
Adah. Hardly hours.
Cain. The mind then hath capacity of time,
And measures it by that which it beholds,
Pleasing or painful; little or almighty.
I had beheld the immemorial works
Of endless beings; skirr'd extinguish'd worlds;
And, gazing on eternity, methought
I had borrow'd more by a few drops of ages
From its immensity; but now I feel
My littleness again. Well said the spirit,
That I was nothing!
Adah. Wherefore said he so?
Jehovah said not that.
Cain. No: *He* contents Him
With making us the *nothing* which we are;
And after flattering dust with glimpses of
Eden and Immortality, resolves
It back to dust again—for what?
Adah. Thou know'st—
Even for our parents' error.
Cain. What is that
To us? they sinn'd, then *let them* die!
Adah. Thou hast not spoken well, nor is that thought
Thy own, but of the spirit who was with thee.
Would *I* could die for them, so *they* might live!
Cain. Why, so say I—provided that one victim
Might satiate the insatiable of life,
And that our little rosy sleeper there
Might never taste of death nor human sorrow,
Nor hand it down to those who spring from him.
Adah. How know we that some such atonement one day
May not redeem our race?
Cain. By sacrificing
The harmless for the guilty! what atonement
Were there? why, *we* are innocent: what have we
Done, that we must be victims for a deed
Before our birth, or need have victims to
Atone for this mysterious, nameless sin—
If it be such a sin to seek for knowledge?
Adah. Alas! thou sinnest now, my Cain: thy words
Sound impious in mine ears.
Cain. Then leave me!
Adah. Never,
Though thy God left thee.
Cain. Say, what have we here?
Adah. Two altars, which our brother Abel made

During thine absence, whereupon to offer
A sacrifice to God on thy return.
Cain. And how knew *he* that *I* would be so ready
With the burnt-offerings, which he daily brings
With a meek brow, whose base humility
Shows more of fear than worship, as a bribe
To the Creator?
Adah. Surely, 'tis well done.
Cain. One altar may suffice; *I* have no offering.
Adah. The fruits of the earth, the early, beautiful
Blossom and bud, and bloom of flowers and fruits,
These are a goodly offering to the Lord,
Given with a gentle and a contrite spirit.
Cain. I have toil'd, and till'd, and sweaten in the sun
According to the curse:—must I do more?
For what should I be gentle? for a war
With all the elements ere they will yield
The bread we eat? For what must I be grateful?
For being dust, and grovelling in the dust,
Till I return to dust? If I am nothing—
For nothing shall I be a hypocrite,
And seem well-pleased with pain? For what should I
Be contrite? for my father's sin, already
Expiate with what we all have undergone,
And to be more than expiated by
The ages prophesied, upon our seed.
Little deems our young blooming sleeper, there,
The germs of an eternal misery
To myriads is within him! better 'twere
I snatch'd him in his sleep, and dash'd him 'gainst
The rocks, than let him live to——
Adah. Oh, my God!
Touch not the child—my child! *thy* child! O Cain!
Cain. Fear not! for all the stars, and all the power
Which sways them, I would not accost yon infant
With ruder greeting than a father's kiss.
Adah. Then, why so awful in thy speech?
Cain. I said,
'Twere better that he ceased to live, than give
Life to so much of sorrow as he must
Endure, and, harder still, bequeath; but since
That saying jars you, let us only say—
'Twere better that he never had been born.
Adah. Oh, do not say so! Where were then the joys,
The mother's joys of watching, nourishing,
And loving him? Soft! he awakes. Sweet Enoch!
[*She goes to the child.*
O Cain! look on him; see how full of life,
Of strength, of bloom, of beauty, and of joy,
How like to me—how like to thee, when gentle,
For *then* we are *all* alike; is 't not so, Cain?
Mother, and sire, and son, our features are
Reflected in each other; as they are
In the clear waters, when *they* are *gentle*, and
When *thou* art *gentle*. Love us, then, my Cain!
And love thyself for our sakes, for we love thee.

Look! how he laughs and stretches out his arms,
And opens wide his blue eyes upon thine,
To hail his father; while his little form
Flutters as wing'd with joy. Talk not of pain!
The childless cherubs well might envy thee
The pleasures of a parent! Bless him, Cain!
As yet he hath no words to thank thee, but
His heart will, and thine own too.

Cain. Bless thee, boy!
If that a mortal blessing may avail thee,
To save thee from the serpent's curse!

Adah. It shall.
Surely a father's blessing may avert
A reptile's subtlety.

Cain. Of that I doubt;
But bless him ne'er the less.

Adah. Our brother comes.

Cain. Thy brother Abel.

Enter ABEL.

Abel. Welcome, Cain! My brother,
The peace of God be on thee!

Cain. Abel, hail!

Abel. Our sister tells me thou hast been wandering,
In high communion with a spirit, far
Beyond our wonted range. Was he of those
We have seen and spoken with, like to our father?

Cain. No.

Abel. Why then commune with him? he may be
A foe to the Most High.

Cain. And friend to man.
Has the Most High been so—if so you term Him?

Abel. Term Him! your words are strange to-day, my brother.
My sister Adah, leave us for awhile—
We mean to sacrifice.

Adah. Farewell, my Cain;
But first embrace thy son. May his soft spirit,
And Abel's pious ministry, recall thee
To peace and holiness! [*Exit* ADAH, *with her child.*

Abel. Where hast thou been?

Cain. I know not.

Abel. Nor what thou hast seen?

Cain. The dead,
The immortal, the unbounded, the omnipotent,
The overpowering mysteries of space—
The innumerable worlds that were and are—
A whirlwind of such overwhelming things,
Suns, moons, and earths, upon their loud-voiced spheres
Singing in thunder round me, as have made me
Unfit for mortal converse: leave me, Abel.

Abel. Thine eyes are flashing with unnatural light,
Thy cheek is flush'd with an unnatural hue,
Thy words are fraught with an unnatural sound—
What may this mean?

Cain. It means——I pray thee, leave me.

Abel. Not till we have pray'd and sacrificed together.
Cain. Abel, I pray thee, sacrifice alone—
Jehovah loves thee well.
Abel. *Both* well, I hope.
Cain. But thee the better: I care not for that;
Thou art fitter for His worship than I am;
Revere Him, then—but let it be alone—
At least, without me.
Abel. Brother, I should ill
Deserve the name of our great father's son,
If, as my elder, I revered thee not,
And in the worship of our God call'd not
On thee to join me, and precede me in
Our priesthood—'tis thy place.
Cain. But I have ne'er
Asserted it.
Abel. The more my grief; I pray thee
To do so now: thy soul seems laboring in
Some strong delusion; it will calm thee.
Cain. No;
Nothing can calm me more. *Calm!* say I? Never
Knew I what calm was in the soul, although
I have seen the elements still'd. My Abel, leave me!
Or let me leave thee to thy pious purpose.
Abel. Neither: we must perform our task together.
Spurn me not.
Cain. If it must be so——well, then,
What shall I do?
Abel. Choose one of those two altars.
Cain. Choose for me: they to me are so much turf
And stone.
Abel. Choose thou!
Cain. I have chosen.
Abel. 'Tis the highest,
And suits thee, as the elder. Now prepare
Thine offerings.
Cain. Where are thine?
Abel. Behold them here—
The firstlings of the flock, and fat thereof—
A shepherd's humble offering.
Cain. I have no flocks;
I am a tiller of the ground, and must
Yield what it yieldeth to my toil—its fruits: [*He gathers fruits.*
Behold them in their various bloom and ripeness.
[*They dress their altars, and kindle a flame upon them.*
Abel. My brother, as the elder, offer first
Thy prayer and thanksgiving with sacrifice.
Cain. No—I am new to this; lead thou the way,
And I will follow—as I may.
Abel (*kneeling*). O God!
Who made us, and who breathed the breath of life
Within our nostrils, who hath blessed us,
And spared, despite our father's sin, to make
His children all lost, as they might have been,
Had not Thy justice been so temper'd with
The mercy which is Thy delight, as to

Accord a pardon like a Paradise,
Compared with our great crimes:—Sole Lord of light!
Of good, and glory, and eternity;
Without whom all were evil, and with whom
Nothing can err, except to some good end
Of Thine omnipotent benevolence—
Inscrutable, but still to be fulfill'd—
Accept from out thy humble first of shepherd's
First of the first-born flocks—an offering,
In itself nothing—as what offering can be
Aught unto Thee?—but yet accept it for
The thanksgiving of him who spreads it in
The face of Thy high heaven, bowing his own
Even to the dust, of which he is, in honor
Of Thee, and of Thy name, for evermore!

Cain (*standing erect during this speech*). Spirit! whate'er or whosoe'er Thou art,
Omnipotent, it may be—and, if good,
Shown in the exemption of Thy deeds from evil;
Jehovah upon earth! and God in heaven!
And it may be with other names, because
Thine attributes seem many, as thy works:—
If Thou must be propitiated with prayers,
Take them! If thou must be induced with altars,
And soften'd with a sacrifice, receive them!
Two beings here erect them unto Thee.
If Thou lov'st blood, the shepherd's shrine which smokes
On my right hand, hath shed it for Thy service
In the first of his flock, whose limbs now reek
In sanguinary incense to Thy skies;
Or if the sweet and blooming fruits of earth,
And milder seasons, which the unstain'd turf
I spread them on now offers in the face
Of the broad sun which ripen'd them, may seem
Good to Thee, inasmuch as they have not
Suffer'd in limb or life, and rather form
A sample of Thy works, than supplication
To look on ours! If a shrine without victim,
And altar without gore, may win Thy favor,
Look on it! And for him who dresseth it,
He is—such as Thou mad'st him; and seeks nothing
Which must be won by kneeling: if he 's evil,
Strike him! Thou art omnipotent, and may'st—
For what can he oppose? If he be good,
Strike him, or spare him, as Thou wilt! since all
Rests upon Thee; and good and evil seem
To have no power themselves, save in Thy will;
And whether that be good or ill I know not,
Not being omnipotent, nor fit to judge
Omnipotence, but merely to endure
Its mandate; which thus far I have endured.

[*The fire upon the altar of* ABEL *kindles into a column of the brightest flame, and ascends to heaven; while a whirlwind throws down the altar of* CAIN, *and scatters the fruits abroad upon the earth.*

Abel (*kneeling*). Oh, brother, pray! Jehovah's wroth with thee.
Cain. Why so?
Abel. Thy fruits are scatter'd on the earth.
Cain. From earth they came, to earth let them return;
Their seed will bear fresh fruit there ere the summer:
Thy burnt flesh-offering prospers better; see
How heaven licks up the flames, when thick with blood!
Abel. Think not upon my offering's acceptance,
But make another of thine own before
It is too late.
Cain. I will build no more altars,
Nor suffer any.—
Abel (*rising*). Cain! what meanest thou?
Cain. To cast down yon vile flatterer of the clouds,
The smoky harbinger of thy dull prayers—
Thine altar, with its blood of lambs and kids,
Which fed on milk, to be destroy'd in blood.
Abel (*opposing him*). Thou shalt not!—add not impious works to impious
Words! let that altar stand—'tis hallow'd now
By the immortal pleasure of Jehovah,
In His acceptance of the victims.
Cain. *His!*
His pleasure! what was His high pleasure in
The fumes of scorching flesh and smoking blood,
To the pain of the bleating mothers, which
Still yearn for their dead offspring? or the pangs
Of the sad ignorant victims underneath
Thy pious knife? Give way! this bloody record
Shall not stand in the sun, to shame creation!
Abel. Brother, give back! thou shalt not touch my altar
With violence: if that thou wilt adopt it,
To try another sacrifice, 'tis thine.
Cain. Another sacrifice! Give way, or else
That sacrifice may be——
Abel. What mean'st thou?
Cain. Give—
Give way!—thy God loves blood!—then look to it:—
Give way, ere He hath *more!*
Abel. In *His* great name,
I stand between thee and the shrine which hath
Had His acceptance.
Cain. If thou lov'st thyself,
Stand back till I have strew'd this turf along
Its native soil:—else——
Abel (*opposing him*). I love God far more
Than life.
Cain (*striking him with a brand on the temples, which he snatches from the altar*).
Then take thy life unto thy God,
Since He loves lives.
Abel (*falls*). What hast thou done, my brother?
Cain. Brother!
Abel. O God! receive Thy servant, and
Forgive his slayer, for he knew not what

He did—Cain, give me—give me thy hand; and tell
Poor Zillah——
Cain (*after a moment's stupefaction*). *My* hand! 'tis all
red, and with—
What? [*A long pause.—Looking slowly round.*
Where am I? alone! Where 's Abel? where
Cain? Can it be that I am he? My brother,
Awake—why liest thou so on the green earth?
'Tis not the hour of slumber;—why so pale?
What, hast thou!——thou wert full of life this morn!
Abel! I pray thee, mock me not! I smote
Too fiercely, but not fatally. Ah, why
Wouldst thou oppose me? This is mockery;
And only done to daunt me:—'twas a blow—
And but a blow. Stir—stir—nay, only stir!
Why, so—that 's well!—thou breath'st! breathe upon me!
O God! O God!
Abel (*very faintly*). What's he who speaks of God?
Cain. Thy murderer.
Abel. Then may God forgive him! Cain,
Comfort poor Zillah:—she has but one brother
Now. [ABEL *dies.*
Cain. And I none!—Who makes me brotherless?
His eyes are open! then he is not dead!
Death is like sleep; and sleep shuts down our lids.
His lips, too, are apart; why then he breathes!
And yet I feel it not.—His heart!—his heart!
Let me see, doth it beat? methinks——No!—no!
This is a vision, else I am become
The native of another and worse world.
The earth swims round me:—what is this?—'tis wet;
[*Puts his hand to his brow, and then looks at it.*
And yet there are no dews!—'Tis blood—my blood—
My brother's and my own! and shed by me!
Then what have I further to do with life,
Since I have taken life from my own flesh?
But he can not be dead!—Is silence death?
No; he will wake: then let me watch by him.
Life cannot be so slight as to be quench'd
Thus quickly!—he hath spoken to me since—
What shall I say to him?—My brother!—No:
He will not answer to that name; for brethren
Smite not each other. Yet—yet—speak to me.
Oh for a word more of that gentle voice,
That I may bear to hear my own again!

Enter ZILLAH.

Zillah. I heard a heavy sound; what can it be?
'Tis Cain, and watching by my husband. What
Dost thou there, brother? Doth he sleep? Oh, heaven!
What means this paleness, and yon stream?—No, no!
It is not blood; for who would shed his blood?
Abel! what's this?—who hath done this? He moves not;
He breathes not: and his hands drop down from mine
With stony lifelessness! Ah! cruel Cain!

Why cam'st thou not in time to save him from
This violence? Whatever hath assail'd him,
Thou wert the stronger, and should'st have stepp'd in
Between him and aggression! Father!—Eve!—
Adah!—come hither! Death is in the world!

[*Exit* ZILLAH, *calling on her Parents, &c.*

Cain (*solus*). And who hath brought him there?—I—who abhor
The name of Death so deeply, that the thought
Empoison'd all my life, before I knew
His aspect—I have led him here, and given
My brother to his cold and still embrace,
As if he would not have asserted his
Inexorable claim without my aid.
I am awake at last—a dreary dream
Had madden'd me;—but *he* shall ne'er awake.

Enter ADAM, EVE, ADAH, *and* ZILLAH.

Adam. A voice of woe from Zillah brings me here.—
What do I see?—'Tis true!—My son!—my son!
Woman, behold the serpent's work, and thine! [*To* EVE.

Eve. Oh! speak not of it now: the serpent's fangs
Are in my heart. My best beloved, Abel!
Jehovah! this is punishment beyond
A mother's sin, to take *him* from me!

Adam. Who
Or what hath done this deed?—speak, Cain, since thou
Wert present; was it some more hostile angel,
Who walks not with Jehovah? or some wild
Brute of the forest?

Eve. Ah! a livid light
Breaks through, as from a thunder-cloud! yon brand,
Massy and bloody! snatch'd from off the altar,
And black with smoke, and red with——

Adam. Speak, my son!
Speak, and assure us, wretched as we are,
That we are not more miserable still.

Adah. Speak, Cain! and say it was not *thou!*

Eve. It was.
I see it now: he hangs his guilty head,
And covers his ferocious eye with hands
Incarnadine.

Adah. Mother, thou dost him wrong—
Cain! clear thee from this horrible accusal,
Which grief wrings from our parent.

Eve. Hear, Jehovah!
May the eternal serpent's curse be on him!
For he was fitter for his seed than ours.
May all his days be desolate. May——

Adah. Hold!
Curse him not, mother, for he is thy son—
Curse him not, mother, for he is my brother,
And my betroth'd.

Eve. He hath left thee no brother—
Zillah no husband—me *no son!*—for thus
I curse him from my sight for evermore!

All bonds I break between us! as he broke
That of his nature, in yon——O death! death!
Why didst thou not take *me*, who first incurr'd thee?
Why dost thou not so now?
Adam. Eve! let not this,
Thy natural grief, lead to impiety!
A heavy doom was long forespoken to us;
And now that it begins, let it be borne
In such sort as may show our God, that we
Are faithful servants to His holy will.
Eve (*pointing to Cain*). *His will!* the will of yon incarnate spirit
Of death, whom I have brought upon the earth
To strew it with the dead. May all the curses
Of life be on him! and his agonies
Drive him forth o'er the wilderness, like us
From Eden, till his children do by him
As he did by his brother! May the swords
And wings of fiery cherubim pursue him
By day and night—snakes spring up in his path—
Earth's fruits be ashes in his mouth—the leaves
On which he lays his head to sleep be strew'd
With scorpions! May his dreams be of his victim!
His waking a continual dread of death!
May the clear rivers turn to blood, as he
Stoops down to stain them with his raging lip!
May every element shun or change to him!
May he live in the pangs which others die with!
And death itself wax something worse than death
To him who first acquainted him with man!
Hence, fratricide! henceforth that word is *Cain*,
Through all the coming myriads of mankind,
Who shall abhor thee, though thou wert their sire!
May the grass wither from thy feet! the woods
Deny thee shelter! earth a home! the dust
A grave! the sun his light! and heaven her God! [*Exit* EVE.
Adam. Cain! get thee forth: we dwell no more together.
Depart! and leave the dead to me——I am
Henceforth alone—we never must meet more.
Adah. Oh, part not with him thus, my father: do not
Add thy deep curse to Eve's upon his head!
Adam. I curse him not: his spirit be his curse.
Come, Zillah!
Zillah. I must watch by my husband's corse.
Adam. We will return again, when he is gone
Who hath provided for us this dread office.
Come, Zillah.
Zillah. Yet one kiss on yon pale clay,
And those lips once so warm—my heart! my heart!
[*Exeunt* ADAM *and* ZILLAH, *weeping.*
Adah. Cain! thou hast heard, we must go forth. I am ready,
So shall our children be. I will bear Enoch,
And you his sister. Ere the sun declines
Let us depart, nor walk the wilderness
Under the cloud of night. Nay, speak to me,
To *me*—*thine own.*

Cain. Leave me!
Adah. Why, all have left thee.
Cain. And wherefore lingerest thou? Dost thou not fear
To dwell with one who hath done this?
Adah. I fear
Nothing except to leave thee, much as I
Shrink from the deed which leaves thee brotherless.
I must not speak of this—it is between thee
And the great God.
A Voice from within exclaims, Cain! Cain!
Adah. Hear'st thou that voice?
The Voice within. Cain! Cain!
Adah. It soundeth like an angel's tone.

Enter the ANGEL OF THE LORD.

Angel. Where is thy brother Abel?
Cain. Am I then
My brother's keeper?
Angel. Cain! what hast thou done?
The voice of thy slain brother's blood cries out,
Even from the ground, unto the Lord!—Now art thou
Cursed from the earth, which open'd late her mouth
To drink thy brother's blood from thy rash hand.
Henceforth, when thou shalt till the ground, it shall not
Yield thee her strength: a fugitive shalt thou
Be from this day, and vagabond on earth!
Adah. This punishment is more than he can bear.
Behold, thou drivest him from the face of earth,
And from the face of God shall he be hid.
A fugitive and vagabond on earth,
'Twill come to pass, that whoso findeth him
Shall slay him.
Cain. Would they could! but who are they
Shall slay me? Where are these on the lone earth
As yet unpeopled?
Angel. Thou hast slain thy brother,
And who shall warrant thee against thy son?
Adah. Angel of Light! be merciful, nor say
That this poor aching breast now nourishes
A murderer in my boy, and of his father.
Angel. Then he would but be what his father is.
Did not the milk of Eve give nutriment
To him thou now seest so besmear'd with blood?
The fratricide might well engender parricides.—
But it shall not be so—the Lord thy God
And mine commandeth me to set His seal
On Cain, so that he may go forth in safety.
Who slayeth Cain, a sevenfold vengeance shall
Be taken on his head. Come hither!
Cain. What
Wouldst thou with me?
Angel. To mark upon thy brow
Exemption from such deeds as thou hast done.
Cain. No; let me die!
Angel. It must not be.
[*The* ANGEL *sets the mark on* CAIN'S *brow.*

Cain. It burns
My brow, but nought to that which is within it.
Is there more? let me meet it as I may.
Angel. Stern hast thou been and stubborn from the womb,
As the ground thou must henceforth till; but he
Thou slew'st was gentle as the flocks he tended.
Cain. After the fall too soon was I begotten;
Ere yet my mother's mind subsided from
The serpent, and my sire still mourn'd for Eden.
That which I am, I am; I did not seek
For life, nor did I make myself; but could I
With my own death redeem him from the dust—
And why not so? let him return to day,
And I lie ghastly! so shall be restored
By God the life to him He loved; and taken
From me a being I ne'er loved to bear.
Angel. Who shall heal murder? what is done is done;
Go forth! fulfil thy days! and be thy deeds
Unlike the last! [*The* ANGEL *disappears.*
Adah. He 's gone, let us go forth;
I hear our little Enoch cry within our bower.
Cain. Ah! little knows he what he weeps for!
And I who have shed blood cannot shed tears!
But the four rivers would not cleanse my soul.
Think'st thou my boy will bear to look on me?
Adah. If I thought that he would not, I would—
Cain (*interrupting her*). No,
No more of threats: we have had too many of them:
Go to our children; I will follow thee.
Adah. I will not leave thee lonely with the dead;
Let us depart together.
Cain. Oh! thou dead
And everlasting witness! whose unsinking
Blood darkens earth and heaven! what thou *now* art
I know not! but if *thou* seest what *I* am,
I think thou wilt forgive him whom his God
Can ne'er forgive, nor his own soul.—Farewell!
I must not, dare not touch what I have made thee.
I, who sprung from the same womb with thee, drain'd
The same breast, clasp'd thee often to my own,
In fondness brotherly and boyish, I
Can never meet thee more, nor even dare
To do that for thee, which thou shouldst have done
For me—compose thy limbs into their grave—
The first grave yet dug for mortality.
But who hath dug that grave? Oh, earth! Oh, earth!
For all the fruits thou hast render'd to me, I
Give thee back this.—Now for the wilderness!
[ADAH *stoops down and kisses the body of* ABEL.
Adah. A dreary, and an early doom, my brother,
Has been thy lot! Of all who mourn for thee,
I alone must not weep. My office is
Henceforth to dry up tears, and not to shed them:
But yet, of all who mourn, none mourn like me,
Not only for thyself, but him who slew thee.
Now, Cain! I will divide thy burden with thee.

Cain. Eastward from Eden will we take our way:
'Tis the most desolate, and suits my steps.
Adah. Lead! thou shalt be my guide, and may our God
Be thine! Now let us carry forth our children.
Cain. And *he* who lieth there was childless. I
Have dried the fountain of a gentle race,
Which might have graced his recent marriage couch,
And might have temper'd this stern blood of mine,
Uniting with our children Abel's offspring!
O Abel!
Adah. Peace be with him!
Cain. But with *me!* [*Exeunt.*

THE CURSE OF MINERVA.*

"Pallas te hoc vulnere, Pallas
Immolat, et pœnam scelerato ex sanguine sumit."
Æneid. lib. xii.

ATHENS: CAPUCHIN CONVENT, March 17, 1811

SLOW sinks, more lovely ere his race be run,
Along Morea's hills the setting sun;
Not, as in northern climes, obscurely bright,
But one unclouded blaze of living light;
O'er the hush'd deep the yellow beam he throws,
Gilds the green wave that trembles as it glows:
On old Ægina's rock and Hydra's isle
The god of gladness sheds his parting smile;
O'er his own regions lingering loves to shine,
Though there his altars are no more divine.
Descending fast, the mountain-shadows kiss
Thy glorious gulf, unconquer'd Salamis!
Their azure arches through the long expanse,
More deeply purpled, meet his mellowing glance,
And tenderest tints, along their summits driven,
Mark his gay course, and own the hues of heaven,
Till, darkly shaded from the land and deep,
Behind his Delphian rock he sinks to sleep.

On such an eve his palest beam he cast,
When, Athens! here thy wisest look'd his last.
How watch'd thy better sons his farewell ray,
That closed their murder'd sage's† latest day;
Not yet—not yet—Sol pauses on the hill,
The precious hour of parting lingers still;
But sad his light to agonizing eyes,
And dark the mountain's once delightful dyes;
Gloom o'er the lovely land he seem'd to pour,
The land where Phœbus never frown'd before;

* This satire on Lord Elgin for bringing the remains of Grecian art from the Parthenon to England was not published by Lord Byron. He suppressed it, and used the beautiful opening lines for his Corsair. It was published four years after his death, in 1828.

† Socrates drank the hemlock a short time before sunset (the hour of execution), notwithstanding the entreaties of his disciples to wait till the sun went down.

But ere he sunk below Cithæron's head,
The cup of woe was quaff'd—the spirit fled;
The soul of him that scorn'd to fear or fly,
Who lived and died as none can live or die.

But, lo! from high Hymettus to the plain,
The queen of night asserts her silent reign:*
No murky vapor, herald of the storm,
Hides her fair face, or girds her glowing form;
With cornice glimmering as the moonbeams play,
There the white column greets her grateful ray;
And bright around, with quivering beams beset,
Her emblem sparkles o'er the minaret:
The groves of olive scatter'd dark and wide,
Where meek Cephisus sheds his scanty tide,
The cypress saddening by the sacred mosque,
The gleaming turret of the gay kiosk,†
And sad and sombre 'mid the holy calm,
Near Theseus' fane, yon solitary palm:
All, tinged with varied hues, arrest the eye;
And dull were his that pass'd them heedless by.

Again the Ægean, heard no more afar,
Lulls his chafed breast from elemental war:
Again his waves in milder tints unfold
Their long expanse of sapphire and of gold,
Mix'd with the shades of many a distant isle,
That frown, where gentler ocean deigns to smile.

As thus, within the walls of Pallas' fane,‡
I mark'd the beauties of the land and main,
Alone, and friendless, on the magic shore,
Whose arts and arms but live in poet's lore;
Oft as the matchless dome I turn'd to scan,
Sacred to gods, but not secure from man,
The past return'd, the present seem'd to cease,
And Glory knew no clime beyond her Greece!

Hours roll'd along, and Dian's orb on high
Had gain'd the centre of her softest sky;
And yet unwearied still my footsteps trod
O'er the vain shrine of many a vanish'd god;
But chiefly, Pallas! thine; when Hecate's glare,
Check'd by thy columns, fell more sadly fair
O'er the chill marble, where the startling tread
Thrills the lone heart like echoes from the dead.
Long had I mused, and treasured every trace
The wreck of Greece recorded of her race,
When, lo! a giant form before me strode,
And Pallas hail'd me in her own abode!

* The twilight in Greece is much shorter than in our own country; the days in winter are longer, but in summer of less duration.

† The kiosk is a Turkish summer-house; the palm is without the present walls of Athens, not far from the temple of Theseus, between which and the tree the wall intervenes. Cephisus' stream is indeed scanty, and Ilissus has no stream at all.

‡ The Parthenon, or Temple of Minerva.

Yes, 'twas Minerva's self; but, ah! how changed
Since o'er the Dardan field in arms she ranged!
Not such as erst, by her divine command,
Her form appear'd from Phidias' plastic hand:
Gone were the terrors of her awful brow,
Her idle ægis bore no Gorgon now;
Her helm was dinted, and the broken lance
Seem'd weak and shaftless e'en to mortal glance;
The olive-branch, which still she deign'd to clasp,
Shrunk from her touch and wither'd in her grasp;
And, ah! though still the brightest of the sky,
Celestial tears bedimm'd her large blue eye;
Round the rent casque her owlet circled slow,
And mourn'd his mistress with a shriek of woe!

"Mortal!"—'twas thus she spake—"that blush of shame
Proclaims the Briton, once a noble name:
First of the mighty, foremost of the free,
Now honor'd *less* by all, and *least* by me:
Chief of thy foes shall Pallas still be found.
Seek'st thou the cause of loathing?—look around.
Lo! here, despite of war and wasting fire,
I saw successive tyrannies expire.
'Scaped from the ravage of the Turk and Goth,
Thy country sends a spoiler worse than both.
Survey this vacant, violated fane;
Recount the relics torn that yet remain:
These Cecrops placed, *this* Pericles adorn'd,*
That Adrian rear'd when drooping Science mourn'd.
What more I owe, let gratitude attest—
Know Alaric and Elgin did the rest.
That all may learn from whence the plunderer came,
The insulted wall sustains his hated name:
For Elgin's fame thus grateful Pallas pleads,
Below, his name—above, behold his deeds!
Be ever hail'd with equal honor here
The Gothic monarch and the Pictish peer:
Arms gave the first his right, the last had none,
But basely stole what less barbarians won.
So when the lion quits his fell repast,
Next prowls the wolf, the filthy jackal last.
Flesh, limbs, and blood the former make their own,
The last poor brute securely gnaws the bone.
Yet still the gods are just, and crimes are cross'd:
See here what Elgin won, and what he lost!
Another name with *his* pollutes my shrine:
Behold where Dian's beams disdain to shine!
Some retribution still might Pallas claim,
When Venus half avenged Minerva's shame."†

* This is spoken of the city in general, and not of the Acropolis in particular. The temple of Jupiter Olympius, by some supposed the Pantheon, was finished by Hadrian; sixteen columns are standing, of the most beautiful marble and architecture.

† His Lordship's name, and that of one who no longer bears it, are carved conspicuously on the Parthenon: above, in a part not far distant, are the torn remnants of the basso-relievos, destroyed in a vain attempt to remove them.

She ceased awhile, and thus I dared reply,
To soothe the vengeance kindling in her eye:
"Daughter of Jove! in Britain's injured name,
A true-born Briton may the deed disclaim.
Frown not on England; England owns him not:
Athena, no! thy plunderer was a Scot.
Ask'st thou the difference? From fair Phyle's towers
Survey Bœotia;—Caledonia's ours.
And well I know within that bastard land*
Hath Wisdom's goddess never held command;
A barren soil, where Nature's germs, confined
To stern sterility, can stint the mind;
Whose thistle well betrays the niggard earth,
Emblem of all to whom the land gives birth;
Each genial influence nurtured to resist;
A land of meanness, sophistry, and mist.
Each breeze from foggy mount and marshy plain
Dilutes with drivel every drizzly brain,
Till, burst at length, each watery head o'erflows,
Foul as their soil, and frigid as their snows.
Then thousand schemes of petulance and pride
Dispatch her scheming children far and wide:
Some east, some west, some everywhere but north,
In quest of lawless gain, they issue forth.
And thus—accursed be the day and year!—
She sent a Pict to play the felon here.
Yet Caledonia claims some native worth,
As dull Bœotia gave a Pindar birth.
So may her few, the letter'd and the brave,
Bound to no clime, and victors of the grave,
Shake off the sordid dust of such a land,
And shine like children of a happier strand;
As once of yore in some obnoxious place,
Ten names (if found) had saved a wretched race."

"Mortal!" the blue-eyed maid resumed, "once more
Bear back my mandate to thy native shore.
Though fallen, alas! this vengeance yet is mine,
To turn my counsels far from lands like thine.
Hear then in silence Pallas' stern behest;
Hear and believe, for time will tell the rest.

"First on the head of him who did this deed
My curse shall light, on him and all his seed;
Without one spark of intellectual fire,
Be all the sons as senseless as the sire;
If one with wit the parent brood disgrace,
Believe him bastard of a brighter race:
Still with his hireling artists let him prate,
And Folly's praise repay for Wisdom's hate;
Long of their patron's gusto let them tell,
Whose noblest, *native* gusto is—to sell:
To sell, and make—may Shame record the day!—
The state receiver of his pilfer'd prey.
Meantime, the flattering, feeble dotard, West,
Europe's worst dauber, and poor Britain's best,

* "Irish bastards," according to Sir Callaghan O'Bralaghan.

With palsied hand shall turn each model o'er,
And own himself an infant of fourscore.*
Be all the bruisers cull'd from all St. Giles',
That art and nature may compare their styles;
While brawny brutes in stupid wonder stare.
And marvel at his Lordship's 'stone shop' there.†
Round the throng'd gates shall sauntering coxcombs creep,
To lounge and lucubrate, to prate and peep;
While many a languid maid, with longing sigh,
On giant statues casts the curious eye;
The room with transient glance appears to skim,
Yet marks the mighty back and length of limb;
Mourns o'er the difference of *now* and *then;*
Exclaims, 'These Greeks indeed were proper men!'
Draws slight comparisons of *these* with *those*,
And envies Lais all her Attic beaux.
When shall a modern maid have swains like these?
Alas, Sir Harry is no Hercules!
And last of all amidst the gaping crew,
Some calm spectator, as he takes his view,
In silent indignation, mix'd with grief,
Admires the plunder, but abhors the thief.
Oh, loath'd in life, nor pardon'd in the dust,
May hate pursue his sacrilegious lust!
Link'd with the fool that fired the Ephesian dome,
Shall vengeance follow far beyond the tomb,
And Eratostratos‡ and Elgin shine,
In many a branding page and burning line;
Alike reserved for aye to stand accursed,
Perchance the second blacker than the first.

"So let him stand through ages yet unborn,
Fix'd statue on the pedestal of Scorn;
Though not for him alone revenge shall wait,
But fits thy country for her coming fate.
Hers were the deeds that taught her lawless son
To do what oft Britannia's self had done.
Look to the Baltic—blazing from afar,
Your old ally yet mourns perfidious war.
Not to such deeds did Pallas lend her aid,
Or break the compact which herself had made;
Far from such councils, from the faithless field
She fled—but left behind her Gorgon shield;
A fatal gift that turned your friends to stone,
And left lost Albion hated and alone.

"Look to the East, where Ganges' swarthy race
Shall shake your tyrant empire to its base;
Lo! there Rebellion rears her ghastly head,
And glares the Nemesis of native dead;

* Mr. West, on seeing the "Elgin Collection" (I suppose we shall hear of the "Jersaw" and "Jack Sheppard" collection), declared himself "a mere Pygmy" in art.

† Poor Cribb was sadly puzzled when the marbles were first exhibited at Elgin House; he asked if it was not "a stone shop."—He was right: it is a shop.

‡ Eratostratos, who, in order to make his name remembered, set fire to the Temple of Diana at Ephesus.

Till Indus rolls a deep purpureal flood,
And claims his long arrear of Northern blood
So may ye perish!—Pallas, when she gave
Your free-born rights, forbade ye to enslave.

"Look on your Spain!—she clasps the hand she hates,
But boldly clasps, and thrusts you from her gates.
Bear witness, bright Barossa! thou canst tell
Whose were the sons that bravely fought and fell.
But Lusitania, kind and dear ally,
Can spare a few to fight, and sometimes fly.
Oh, glorious field! by Famine fiercely won,
The Gaul retires for once, and all is done!
But when did Pallas teach that one retreat
Retrieved three long Olympiads of defeat?

"Look last at home—you love not to look there.
On the grim smile of comfortless despair:
Your city saddens: loud though Revel howls,
Here Famine faints, and yonder Rapine prowls
See all alike of more or less bereft;
No misers tremble when there's nothing left.
'Blest paper credit,'* who shall dare to sing?
It clogs like lead Corruption's weary wing.
Yet Pallas pluck'd each premier by the ear,
Who gods and men alike disdain'd to hear;
But one, repentant o'er a bankrupt state,
On Pallas calls,—but calls, alas! too late:
Then raves for * * *; to that Mentor bends,
Though he and Pallas never yet were friends.
Him senates hear, whom never yet they heard,
Contemptuous once, and now no less absurd.
So, once of yore, each reasonable frog
Swore faith and fealty to his sovereign 'log.'
Thus hail'd your rulers their patrician clod,
As Egypt chose an onion for a god.

"Now fare ye well! enjoy your little hour:
Go, grasp the shadow of your vanish'd power;
Gloss o'er the failure of each fondest scheme;
Your strength a name, your bloated wealth a dream.
Gone is that gold, the marvel of mankind,
And pirates barter all that's left behind.†
No more the hirelings, purchased near and far,
Crowd to the ranks of mercenary war;
The idle merchant on the useless quay
Droops o'er the bales no bark may bear away;
Or, back returning, sees rejected stores
Rot piecemeal on his own encumber'd shores:
The starved mechanic breaks his rusting loom,
And desperate mans him 'gainst the coming doom.
Then in the senate of your sinking state
Show me the man whose counsels may have weight

* "Blest paper credit! last and best supply,
That lends Corruption lighter wings to fly."
POPE.

† The Deal and Dover traffickers in specie.

Vain is each voice where tones could once command;
E'en factions cease to charm a factious land:
Yet jarring sects convulse a sister isle,
And light with maddening hands the mutual pile.

"'Tis done, 'tis past, since Pallas warns in vain;
The Furies seize her abdicated reign:
Wide o'er the realm they wave their kindling brands,
And wring her vitals with their fiery hands.
But one convulsive struggle still remains,
And Gaul shall weep ere Albion wear her chains.
The banner'd pomp of war, the glittering files,
O'er whose gay trappings stern Bellona smiles:
The brazen trump, the spirit-stirring drum,
That bid the foe defiance ere they come;
The hero bounding at his country's call,
The glorious death that consecrates his fall,
Swell the young heart with visionary charms,
And bid it antedate the joys of arms.
But know, a lesson you may yet be taught,
With death alone are laurels cheaply bought:
Not in the conflict Havoc seeks delight,
His day of mercy is the day of fight.
But when the field is fought, the battle won,
Though drench'd with gore, his woes are but begun:
His deeper deeds as yet ye know by name;
The slaughter'd peasant and the ravish'd dame,
The rifled mansion and the foe-reap'd field,
Ill suit with souls at home, untaught to yield.
Say with what eye along the distant down
Would flying burghers mark the blazing town!
How view the column of ascending flames
Shake his red shadow o'er the startled Thames?
Nay, frown not, Albion! for the torch was thine
That lit such pyres from Tagus to the Rhine:
Now should they burst on thy devoted coast,
Go, ask thy bosom who deserves them most.
The law of heaven and earth is life for life,
And she who raised, in vain regrets, the strife."

MAZEPPA.

ADVERTISEMENT.

"Celui qui remplissait alors cette place était un gentilhomme Polonais, nommé Mazeppa, né dans le palatinat de Podolie: il avait été élevé page de Jean Casimir, et avait pris à sa cour quelque teinture des belles-lettres. Une intrigue qu'il eut dans sa jeunesse avec la femme d'un gentilhomme Polonais ayant été découverte, le mari le fit lier tout nu sur un cheval farouche, et le laissa aller en cet état. Le cheval, qui était du pays de l'Ukraine, y retourna, et y porta Mazeppa, demi-mort de fatigue et de faim. Quelques paysans le secoururent: il resta longtemps parmi eux, et se signala dans plusieurs courses contre les Tartares. La supériorité de ses lumières lui donna une grande considération parmi les Cosaques. sa réputation s'augmentant de jour en jour obligea le Czar à le faire Prince de l'Ukraine."—Voltaire, *Hist. de Charles XII.* p. 196.

"Le roi fuyant, et poursuivi, eut son cheval tué sous lui; le Colonel Gieta, blessé, et perdant tout son sang, lui donna le sien. Ainsi on remit deux fois à cheval, dans sa fuite, ce conquérant qui n'avait pu y monter pendant le bataille."—*Ibid.* p. 216.

"Le roi alla par un autre chemin avec quelques cavaliers. Le carrosse, où il était, rompit dans la marche; on le remit à cheval. Pour comble de disgrace, il s'égara pendant la nuit dans un bois; là, son courage ne pouvant plus suppléer à ses forces épuisées, les douleurs de sa blessure devenues plus insupportables par la fatigue, son cheval étant tombé de lassitude, il se coucha quelques heures au pied d'un arbre, en danger d'être surpris à tout moment par les vainqueurs, qui le cherchaient de tous côtés."—*Ibid.* p. 218.

MAZEPPA.

I.

'Twas after dread Pultowa's day,
When fortune left the royal Swede,
Around a slaughter'd army lay,
No more to combat and to bleed.
The power and glory of the war,
Faithless as their vain votaries, men,
Had pass'd to the triumphant Czar,
And Moscow's walls were safe again,
Until a day more dark and drear,
And a more memorable year,
Should give to slaughter and to shame
A mightier host and haughtier name;
A greater wreck, a deeper fall,
A shock to one—a thunderbolt to all.

II.

Such was the hazard of the die;
The wounded Charles was taught to fly
By day and night, through field and flood,
Stain'd with his own and subjects' blood;
For thousands fell that flight to aid:
And not a voice was heard t' upbraid
Ambition in his humbled hour,
When truth had nought to dread from power.
His horse was slain, and Gieta gave
His own—and died the Russians' slave.
This too sinks after many a league
Of well-sustain'd, but vain fatigue;
And in the depths of forests, darkling
The watch-fires in the distance sparkling—
The beacons of surrounding foes—
A king must lay his limbs at length.
Are these the laurels and repose
For which the nations strain their strength?
They lay him by a savage tree,
In outworn nature's agony;
His wounds were stiff—his limbs were stark—
The heavy hour was chill and dark;
The fever in his blood forbade
A transient slumber's fitful aid:

And thus it was; but yet through all,
Kinglike the monarch bore his fall,
And made, in this extreme of ill,
His pangs the vassals of his will:
All silent and subdued were they,
As once the nations round him lay.

III.

A band of chiefs!—alas, how few,
Since but the fleeting of a day
Had thinn'd it; but this wreck was true
And chivalrous: upon the clay
Each sate him down, all sad and mute,
Beside his monarch and his steed,
For danger levels man and brute,
And all are fellows in their need.
Among the rest Mazeppa made
His pillow in an old oak's shade—
Himself as rough, and scarce less old,
The Ukraine's Hetman, calm and bold;
But first, outspent with this long course,
The Cossack prince rubb'd down his horse,
And made for him a leafy bed,
And smooth'd his fetlocks and his mane,
And slack'd his girth, and stripp'd his rein,
And joy'd to see how well he fed;
For until now he had the dread
His wearied courser might refuse
To browse beneath the midnight dews:
But he was hardy as his lord,
And little cared for bed and board;
But spirited and docile too,
Whate'er was to be done, would do.
Shaggy and swift, and strong of limb,
All Tartar-like he carried him;
Obey'd his voice, and came at call,
And knew him in the midst of all:
Though thousands were around—and Night,
Without a star, pursued her flight—
That steed from sunset until dawn
His chief would follow like a fawn.

IV.

This done, Mazeppa spread his cloak,
And laid his lance beneath his oak,
Felt if his arms in order good
The long day's march had well withstood—
If still the powder fill'd the pan,
And flints unloosen'd kept their lock—
His sabre's hilt and scabbard felt,
And whether they had chafed his belt;—
And next the venerable man,
From out his haversack and can,
Prepared and spread his slender stock;
And to the monarch and his men
The whole or portion offer'd then,

With far less of inquietude
Than courtiers at a banquet would.
And Charles of this his slender share
With smiles partook a moment there,
To force of cheer a greater show,
And seem above both wounds and woe;—
And then he said,—"Of all our band,
Though firm of heart and strong of hand,
In skirmish, march, or forage, none
Can less have said or more have done
Than thee, Mazeppa! On the earth
So fit a pair had never birth,
Since Alexander's days till now,
As thy Bucephalus and thou;
All Scythia's fame to thine should yield
For pricking on o'er flood and field."
Mazeppa answer'd,—"Ill betide
The school wherein I learn'd to ride!"
Quoth Charles,—"Old Hetman, wherefore so,
Since thou hast learn'd the art so well?"
Mazeppa said,—"'Twere long to tell;
And we have many a league to go,
With every now and then a blow,
And ten to one at least the foe,
Before our steeds may graze at ease
Beyond the swift Borysthenes:
And, sire, your limbs have need of rest,
And I will be the sentinel
Of this your troop."—"But I request,"
Said Sweden's monarch, "thou wilt tell
This tale of thine, and I may reap,
Perchance, from this the boon of sleep;
For at this moment from my eyes
The hope of present slumber flies."

"Well, sire, with such a hope I'll track
My seventy years of memory back:
I think 'twas in my twentieth spring,—
Ay, 'twas—when Casimir was king—
John Casimir,—I was his page
Six summers in my earlier age:
A learned monarch, faith! was he,
And most unlike your Majesty:
He made no wars, and did not gain
New realms to lose them back again;
And (save debates in Warsaw's Diet)
He reign'd in most unseemly quiet:
Not that he had no cares to vex;
He loved the muses and the sex:
And sometimes these so froward are,
They made him wish himself at war;
But soon his wrath being o'er, he took
Another mistress, or new book:
And then he gave prodigious fêtes—
All Warsaw gather'd round his gates

To gaze upon his splendid court,
And dames, and chiefs, of princely port;
He was the Polish Solomon,
So sung his poets, all but one,
Who, being unpension'd, made a satire,
And boasted that he could not flatter.
It was a court of jousts and mimes,
Where every courtier tried at rhymes;
Even I for once produced some verses,
And sign'd my odes "Despairing Thyrsis."
There was a certain Palatine,
A count of far and high descent,
Rich as a salt or silver mine:*
And he was proud, ye may divine,
As if from heaven he had been sent:
He had such wealth in blood and ore
As few could match beneath the throne;
And he would gaze upon his store,
And o'er his pedigree would pore,
Until by some confusion led,
Which almost look'd like want of head,
He thought their merits were his own.
His wife was not of his opinion—
His junior she by thirty years—
Grew daily tired of his dominion,
And after wishes, hopes, and fears,
To virtue a few farewell tears,
A restless dream or two, some glances
At Warsaw's youth, some songs, and dances,
Awaited but the usual chances,
Those happy accidents which render
The coldest dames so very tender,
To deck her Count with titles given,
'Tis said, as passports into heaven;
But, strange to say, they rarely boast
Of these, who have deserved them most.

V.

"I was a goodly stripling then:
At seventy years I so may say,
That there were few, or boys or men,
Who, in my dawning time of day,
Of vassal or of knight's degree,
Could vie in vanities with me;
For I had strength, youth, gaiety,
A port, not like to this ye see,
But smooth, as all is rugged now;
For time, and care, and war have plough'd
My very soul from out my brow;
And thus I should be disavow'd
By all my kind and kin, could they
Compare my day and yesterday.
This change was wrought, too, long ere age
Had ta'en my features for his page:

* This comparison of a "*salt* mine" may, perhaps, be permitted to a Pole, as the wealth of the country consists greatly in the salt mines.

With years, ye know, have not declined
My strength, my courage, or my mind,
Or at this hour I should not be
Telling old tales beneath a tree,
With starless skies my canopy.
But let me on: Theresa's form—
Methinks it glides before me now,
Between me and yon chestnut's bough,
The memory is so quick and warm;
And yet I find no words to tell
The shape of her I loved so well:
She had the Asiatic eye,
Such as our Turkish neighborhood
Hath mingled with our Polish blood,
Dark as above us is the sky;
But through it stole a tender light,
Like the first moonrise of midnight;
Large, dark, and swimming in the stream,
Which seem'd to melt to its own beam;
All love, half languor, and half fire,
Like saints that at the stake expire,
And lift their raptured looks on high,
As though it were a joy to die.
A brow like a midsummer lake,
Transparent with the sun therein,
When waves no murmur dare to make,
And heaven beholds her face within.
A cheek and lip—but why proceed?
I loved her then—I love her still;
And such as I am, love indeed
In fierce extremes—in good and ill.
But still we love even in our rage,
And haunted to our very age
With the vain shadow of the past,
As is Mazeppa to the last.

VI.

"We met—we gazed—I saw, and sigh'd;
She did not speak, and yet replied;
There are ten thousand tones and signs
We hear and see, but none defines—
Involuntary sparks of thought,
Which strike from out the heart o'erwrought,
And form a strange intelligence,
Alike mysterious and intense,
Which link the burning chain that binds,
Without their will, young hearts and minds,
Conveying, as the electric wire,
We know not how, the absorbing fire.—
I saw, and sigh'd—in silence wept,
And still reluctant distance kept,
Until I was made known to her,
And we might then and there confer
Without suspicion—then, even then,
I long'd, and was resolved to speak;

But on my lips they died again,
The accents tremulous and weak,
Until one hour.—There is a game,
A frivolous and foolish play,
Wherewith we while away the day;
It is—I have forgot the name—
And we to this, it seems, were set,
By some strange chance, which I forget:
I reck'd not if I won or lost,
It was enough for me to be
So near to hear, and oh! to see
The being whom I loved the most.
I watch'd her as a sentinel,
(May ours this dark night watch as well!)
Until I saw, and thus it was,
That she was pensive, nor perceived
Her occupation, nor was grieved
Nor glad to lose or gain: but still
Play'd on for hours, as if her will
Yet bound her to the place, though not
That hers might be the winning lot.
Then through my brain the thought did pass,
Even as a flash of lightning there,
That there was something in her air
Which would not doom me to despair;
And on the thought my words broke forth,
All incoherent as they were—
Their eloquence was little worth,
But yet she listen'd—'tis enough—
Who listens once will listen twice;
Her heart, be sure, is not of ice,
And one refusal no rebuff.

VII.

"I loved, and was beloved again—
They tell me, sire, you never knew
Those gentle frailties; if 'tis true,
I shorten all my joy or pain;
To you 'twould seem absurd as vain;
But all men are not born to reign,
Or o'er their passions, or as you
Thus o'er themselves and nations too.
I am—or rather *was*—a prince,
A chief of thousands, and could lead
Them on where each would foremost bleed;
But could not o'er myself evince
The like control.—But to resume:
I loved and was beloved again;
In sooth it is a happy doom,
But yet where happiest ends in pain.—
We met in secret, and the hour
Which led me to that lady's bower
Was fiery Expectation's dower.
My days and nights were nothing—all
Except that hour which doth recall
In the long lapse from youth to age

No other like itself—I'd give
The Ukraine back again to live
It o'er once more, and be a page,
The happy page, who was the lord
Of one soft heart, and his own sword,
And had no other gem nor wealth
Save nature's gift of youth and health.—
We met in secret—doubly sweet,
Some say, they find it so to meet;
I know not that—I would have given
My life but to have call'd her mine
In the full view of earth and heaven;
For I did oft and long repine
That we could only meet by stealth.

VIII.

"For lovers there are many eyes,
And such there were on us;—the devil
On such occasions should be civil—
The devil!—I'm loth to do him wrong;
It might be some untoward saint
Who would not be at rest too long,
But to his pious bile give vent—
But one fair night, some lurking spies
Surprised and seized us both.
The Count was something more than wroth—
I was unarm'd; but if in steel,
All cap-à-pie from head to heel,
What 'gainst their numbers could I do,—
'Twas near his castle, far away
From city or from succor near,
And almost on the break of day;
I did not think to see another,
My moments seem'd reduced to few;
And with one prayer to Mary Mother,
And it may be a saint or two,
As I resign'd me to my fate,
They led me to the castle-gate:
Theresa's doom I never knew,
Our lot was henceforth separate.—
An angry man, ye may opine,
Was he, the proud Count Palatine;
And he had reason good to be,
But he was most enraged lest such
An accident should chance to touch
Upon his future pedigree;
Nor less amazed that such a blot
'His noble 'scutcheon should have got,
While he was highest of his line;
Because unto himself he seem'd
The first of men, nor less he deem'd
In others' eyes, and most in mine.
'Sdeath, with a *page*—perchance a king
Had reconciled him to the thing;
But with a stripling of a page—
I felt—but cannot paint his rage.

"'Bring forth the horse!' The horse was brought;
In truth he was a noble steed."

Page 299.

IX.

"'Bring forth the horse!' The horse was brought;
In truth he was a noble steed,
A Tartar of the Ukraine breed,
Who look'd as though the speed of thought
Were in his limbs; but he was wild,
Wild as the wild deer, and untaught,
With spur and bridle undefiled—
'Twas but a day he had been caught;
And snorting, with erected mane,
And struggling fiercely, but in vain,
In the full foam of wrath and dread
To me the desert-born was led;
They bound me on, that menial throng,
Upon his back with many a thong;
Then loosed him with a sudden lash—
Away!—away!—and on we dash!—
Torrents less rapid and less rash!

X.

"Away!—away!—my breath was gone—
I saw not where he hurried on:
'Twas scarcely yet the break of day,
And on he foam'd—away!—away!—
The last of human sounds which rose,
As I was darted from my foes,
Was the wild shout of savage laughter,
Which on the wind came roaring after
A moment from that rabble rout:
With sudden wrath I wrench'd my head,
And snapp'd the cord which to the mane
Had bound my neck in lieu of rein,
And, writhing half my form about,
Howl'd back my curse; but 'midst the thread,
The thunder of my courser's speed,
Perchance they did not hear nor heed:
It vexes me—for I would fain
Have paid their insult back again.
I paid it well in after days:
There is not of that castle-gate,
Its drawbridge and portcullis weight,
Stone, bar, moat, bridge, or barrier left;
Nor of its field a blade of grass,
Save what grows on a ridge of wall,
Where stood the hearthstone of the hall;
And many a time ye there might pass,
Nor dream that e'er that fortress was:
I saw its turrets in a blaze,
Their crackling battlements all cleft,
And the hot lead pour down like rain
From off the scorch'd and blackening roof,
Whose thickness was not vengeance-proof.
They little thought that day of pain,
When launch'd, as on the lightning's flash,
They bade me to destruction dash,
That one day I should come again,

With twice five thousand horse, to thank
The Count for his uncourteous ride.
They play'd me then a bitter prank,
When, with the wild horse for my guide,
They bound me to his foaming flank:
At length I play'd them one as frank—
For time at last sets all things even—
And if we do but watch the hour,
There never yet was human power
Which could evade, if unforgiven,
The patient search and vigil long
Of him who treasures up a wrong.

XI.

"Away, away, my steed and I,
Upon the pinions of the wind,
All human dwellings left behind;
We sped like meteors through the sky,
When with its crackling sound the night
Is chequer'd with the northern light;
Town—village—none were on our track,
But a wild plain of far extent,
And bounded by a forest black;
And, save the scarce seen battlement
On distant heights of some strong hold,
Against the Tartars built of old,
No trace of man. The year before
A Turkish army had march'd o'er;
And where the Spahi's hoof hath trod,
The verdure flies the bloody sod;—
The sky was dull, and dim, and gray,
And a low breeze crept moaning by—
I could have answer'd with a sigh—
But fast we fled, away, away,—
And I could neither sigh nor pray;
And my cold sweat-drops fell like rain
Upon the courser's bristling mane;
But, snorting still with rage and fear,
He flew upon his far career;
At times I almost thought, indeed,
He must have slacken'd in his speed;
But no—my bound and slender frame
Was nothing to his angry might,
And merely like a spur became:
Each motion which I made to free
My swoll'n limbs from their agony
Increased his fury and affright:
I tried my voice—'twas faint and low,
But yet he swerved as from a blow;
And, starting to each accent, sprang
As from a sudden trumpet's clang;
Meantime my cords were wet with gore,
Which, oozing through my limbs, ran o'er;
And in my tongue the thirst became
A something fierier than flame.

XII.

"We near'd the wild wood—'twas so wide,
I saw no bounds on either side;
'Twas studded with old sturdy trees,
That bent not to the roughest breeze
Which howls down from Siberia's waste,
And strips the forest in its haste—
But these were few and far between,
Set thick with shrubs more young and green,
Luxuriant with their annual leaves,
Ere strewn by those autumnal eves
That nip the forest's foliage dead,
Discolor'd with a lifeless red,
Which stands thereon, like stiffen'd gore
Upon the slain when battle 's o'er,
And some long winter's night hath shed
Its frosts o'er every tombless head,
So cold and stark the raven's beak
May peck unpierced each frozen cheek:
'Twas a wild waste of underwood,
And here and there a chestnut stood,
The strong oak, and the hardy pine;
But far apart—and well it were,
Or else a different lot were mine—
The boughs gave way, and did not tear
My limbs; and I found strength to bear
My wounds, already scarr'd with cold—
My bonds forbade to loose my hold.
We rustled through the leaves like wind,
Left shrubs, and trees, and wolves behind;
By night I heard them on the track,
Their troop came hard upon our back,
With their long gallop, which can tire
The hound's deep hate and hunter's fire:
Where'er we flew they follow'd on,
Nor left us with the morning sun;
Behind I saw them, scarce a rood,
At daybreak winding through the wood,
And through the night had heard their feet
Their stealing, rustling step repeat.
Oh! how I wish'd for spear or sword,
At least to die amidst the horde,
And perish—if it must be so—
At bay, destroying many a foe.
When first my courser's race begun,
I wish'd the goal already won;
But now I doubted strength and speed.
Vain doubt! his swift and savage breed
Had nerved him like the mountain roe;
Nor faster falls the blinding snow
Which whelms the peasant near the door
Whose threshold he shall cross no more,
Bewilder'd with the dazzling blast,
Than through the forest-paths he pass'd—

Untired, untamed, and worse than wild;
All furious as a favor'd child
Balk'd of its wish; or fiercer still—
A woman piqued—who has her will.

XIII.

"The wood was pass'd; 'twas more than noon,
But chill the air, although in June;
Or it might be my veins ran cold—
Prolong'd endurance tames the bold;
And I was then not what I seem,
But headlong as a wintry stream,
And wore my feelings out before
I well could count their causes o'er:
And what with fury, fear, and wrath,
The tortures which beset my path,
Cold, hunger, sorrow, shame, distress,
Thus bound in nature's nakedness;
Sprung from a race whose rising blood,
When stirr'd beyond its calmer mood,
And trodden hard upon, is like
The rattlesnake's, in act to strike,
What marvel if this worn-out trunk
Beneath its woes a moment sunk?
The earth gave way, the skies roll'd round,
I seem'd to sink upon the ground;
But err'd, for I was fastly bound.
My heart turn'd sick, my brain grew sore,
And throbb'd awhile, then beat no more:
The skies spun like a mighty wheel;
I saw the trees like drunkards reel,
And a slight flash sprang o'er my eyes,
Which saw no further: he who dies
Can die no more than then I died.
O'ertortured by that ghastly ride,
I felt the blackness come and go,
And strove to wake; but could not make
My senses climb up from below:
I felt as on a plank at sea,
When all the waves that dash o'er thee
At the same time upheave and whelm,
And hurl thee towards a desert realm.
My undulating life was as
The fancied lights that flitting pass
Our shut eyes in deep midnight, when
Fever begins upon the brain;
But soon it pass'd, with little pain,
But a confusion worse than such:
I own that I should deem it much,
Dying, to feel the same again;
And yet I do suppose we must
Feel far more ere we turn to dust:
No matter; I have bared my brow
Full in Death's face—before—and now.

XIV.

"My thoughts came back; where was I? Cold,
And numb, and giddy: pulse by pulse
Life reassumed its lingering hold,
And throb by throb; till grown a pang
Which for a moment could convulse,
My blood reflow'd, though thick and chill;
My ear with uncouth noises rang,
My heart began once more to thrill;
My sight return'd, though dim, alas!
And thicken'd, as it were with glass.
Methought the dash of waves was nigh;
There was a gleam, too, of the sky
Studded with stars;—it is no dream;
The wild horse swims the wilder stream,
The bright, broad river's gushing tide
Sweeps, winding onward, far and wide,
And we are half-way, struggling o'er
To yon unknown and silent shore.
The waters broke my hollow trance,
And with a temporary strength
My stiffen'd limbs were rebaptized.
My courser's broad breast proudly braves,
And dashes off the ascending waves,
And onward we advance!
We reach the slippery shore at length,
A haven I but little prized,
For all behind was dark and drear,
And all before was night and fear.
How many hours of night or day
In those suspended pangs I lay,
I could not tell; I scarcely knew
If this were human breath I drew.

XV.

"With glossy skin, and dripping mane,
And reeling limbs, and reeking flank,
The wild steed's sinewy nerves still strain
Up the repelling bank.
We gain the top; a boundless plain
Spreads through the shadow of the night,
And onward, onward, onward seems
Like precipices in our dreams,
To stretch beyond the sight;
And here and there a speck of white,
Or scatter'd spot of dusky green,
In masses broke into the light,
As rose the moon upon my right:
But nought distinctly seen
In the dim waste would indicate
The omen of a cottage gate;
No twinkling taper from afar
Stood like a hospitable star;
Not even an ignis-fatuus rose
To make him merry with my woes:

That very cheat had cheer'd me then!
Although detected, welcome still!
Reminding me, through every ill,
Of the abodes of men.

XVI.

"Onward we went, but slack and slow;
His savage force at length o'erspent,
The drooping courser, faint and low,
Or feebly foaming went.
A sickly infant had had power
To guide him forward in that hour;
But useless all to me:
His new-born tameness nought avail'd,
My limbs were bound; my force had fail'd,
Perchance, had they been free.
With feeble effort still I tried
To rend the bonds so starkly tied—
But still it was in vain;
My limbs were only wrung the more,
And soon the idle strife gave o'er,
Which but prolong'd their pain:
The dizzy race seem'd almost done,
Although no goal was nearly won:
Some streaks announced the coming sun—
How slow, alas, he came!
Methought that mist of dawning gray
Would never dapple into day;
How heavily it roll'd away—
Before the eastern flame
Rose crimson, and deposed the stars,
And call'd the radiance from their cars,
And fill'd the earth, from his deep throne,
With lonely lustre, all his own.

XVII.

"Up rose the sun: the mists were curl'd
Back from the solitary world
Which lay around—behind—before:
What booted it to traverse o'er
Plain, forest, river? Man nor brute,
Nor dint of hoof, nor print of foot,
Lay in the wild luxuriant soil;
No sign of travel—none of toil;
The very air was mute;
And not an insect's shrill small horn,
Nor matin bird's new voice, was borne
From herb nor thicket. Many a werst,
Panting as if his heart would burst,
The weary brute still stagger'd on;
And still we were—or seem'd—alone:
At length, while reeling on our way,
Methought I heard a courser neigh,
From out yon tuft of blackening firs.
Is it the wind those branches stirs?
No, no! from out the forest prance

A trampling troop; I see them come!
In one vast squadron they advance!
I strove to cry—my lips were dumb.
The steeds rush on in plunging pride;
But where are they the reins to guide?
A thousand horse—and none to ride!
With flowing tail, and flying mane,
Wide nostrils, never stretch'd by pain,
Mouths bloodless to the bit or rein,
And feet that iron never shod,
And flanks unscarr'd by spur or rod,
A thousand horse, the wild, the free,
Like waves that follow o'er the sea,
Came thickly thundering on,
As if our faint approach to meet;
The sight re-nerved my courser's feet,
A moment staggering, feebly fleet,
A moment, with a faint low neigh,
He answer'd, and then fell;
With gasps and glazing eyes he lay,
And reeking limbs immovable,
His first and last career is done!
On came the troop—they saw him stoop,
They saw me strangely bound along
His back with many a bloody thong:
They stop—they start—they snuff the air,
Gallop a moment here and there,
Approach, retire, wheel round and round,
Then plunging back with sudden bound,
Headed by one black mighty steed,
Who seem'd the patriarch of his breed,
Without a single speck or hair
Of white upon his shaggy hide:
They snort—they foam—neigh—swerve aside,
And backward to the forest fly,
By instinct, from a human eye.—
They left me there to my despair,
Link'd to the dead and stiffening wretch,
Whose lifeless limbs beneath me stretch,
Relieved from that unwonted weight,
From whence I could not extricate
Nor him, nor me;—and there we lay,
The dying on the dead!
I little deem'd another day
Would see my houseless, helpless head.

"And there from morn till twilight bound,
I felt the heavy hours toil round,
With just enough of life to see
My last of suns go down on me,
In hopeless certainty of mind,
That makes us feel at length resign'd
To that which our foreboding years
Present the worst and last of fears:
Inevitable—even a boon!
Nor more unkind for coming soon;

Yet shunn'd and dreaded with such care,
As if it only were a snare
That prudence might escape:
At times both wish'd for and implored,
At times sought with self-pointed sword,
Yet still a dark and hideous close
To even intolerable woes,
And welcome in no shape.
And, strange to say, the sons of pleasure,
They who have revell'd beyond measure
In beauty, wassail, wine, and treasure,
Die calm, or calmer, oft than he
Whose heritage was misery:
For he who hath in turn run through
All that was beautiful and new,
Hath nought to hope, and nought to leave;
And, save the future (which is view'd
Not quite as men are base or good,
But as their nerves may be endued),
With nought perhaps to grieve:—
The wretch still hopes his woes must end,
And Death, whom he should deem his friend,
Appears to his distemper'd eyes,
Arrived to rob him of his prize,
The tree of his new Paradise.
To-morrow would have given him all,
Repaid his pangs, repair'd his fall:
To-morrow would have been the first
Of days no more deplored or curst,
But bright, and long, and beckoning years,
Seen dazzling through the mist of tears,
Guerdon of many a painful hour;
To-morrow would have given him power
To rule, to shine, to smite, to save—
And must it dawn upon his grave?

XVIII.

"The sun was sinking—still I lay
Chain'd to the chill and stiffening steed;
I thought to mingle there our clay,
And my dim eyes of death had need,
No hope arose of being freed:
I cast my last looks up the sky,
And there between me and the sun
I saw the expecting raven fly,
Who scarce would wait till both should die,
Ere his repast begun;
He flew, and perch'd, then flew once more,
And each time nearer than before;
I saw his wing through twilight flit,
And once so near me he alit
I could have smote, but lack'd the strength;
But the slight motion of my hand,
And feeble scratching of the sand,
The exerted throat's faint struggling noise,
Which scarcely could be call'd a voice,

Together scared him off at length.—
I know no more—my latest dream
Is something of a lovely star
Which fix'd my dull eyes from afar,
And went and came with wandering beam,
And of the cold, dull, swimming, dense
Sensation of recurring sense,
And then subsiding back to death,
And then again a little breath,
A little thrill, a short suspense,
An icy sickness curdling o'er
My heart, and sparks that cross'd my brain—
A gasp, a throb, a start of pain,
A sigh, and nothing more.

XIX.

"I woke—Where was I?—Do I see
A human face look down on me?
And doth a roof above me close?
Do these limbs on a couch repose?
Is this a chamber where I lie?
And is it mortal, yon bright eye,
That watches me with gentle glance?
I close my own again once more,
As doubtful that the former trance
Could not as yet be o'er.
A slender girl, long-hair'd, and tall,
Sate watching by the cottage wall;
The sparkle of her eye I caught,
Even with my first return of thought;
For ever and anon she threw
A prying, pitying glance on me
With her black eyes so wild and free;
I gazed, and gazed, until I knew
No vision it could be,—
But that I lived, and was released
From adding to the vulture's feast:
And when the Cossack maid beheld
My heavy eyes at length unseal'd,
She smiled—and I essay'd to speak,
But fail'd—and she approach'd, and made
With lip and finger signs that said,
I must not strive as yet to break
The silence, till my strength should be
Enough to leave my accents free;
And then her hand on mine she laid,
And smooth'd the pillow for my head,
And stole along on tiptoe tread,
And gently oped the door, and spake
In whispers—ne'er was voice so sweet!
Even music follow'd her light feet;—
But those she call'd were not awake,
And she went forth; but ere she pass'd,
Another look on me she cast,
Another sign she made, to say

That I had nought to fear, that all
Were near, at my command or call,
And she would not delay
Her due return:—while she was gone,
Methought I felt too much alone.

XX.

"She came with mother and with sire—
What need of more?—I will not tire
With long recital of the rest
Since I became the Cossack's guest.
They found me senseless on the plain—
They bore me to the nearest hut—
They brought me into life again—
Me—one day o'er their realm to reign!
Thus the vain fool who strove to glut
His rage, refining on my pain,
Sent me forth to the wilderness,
Bound, naked, bleeding, and alone,
To pass the desert to a throne,—
What mortal his own doom may guess?—
Let none despond, let none despair!
To-morrow the Borysthenes
May see our coursers graze at ease
Upon his Turkish bank—and never
Had I such welcome for a river
As I shall yield when safely there.
Comrades, good night!"—The Hetman threw
His length beneath the oak-tree shade,
With leafy couch already made,
A bed nor comfortless nor new
To him, who took his rest whene'er
The hour arrived, no matter where:
His eyes the hastening slumbers steep,
And if ye marvel Charles forgot
To thank his tale, *he* wonder'd not—
The king had been an hour asleep.

THE PROPHECY OF DANTE.

1821.

"'Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore,
And coming events cast their shadows before."
CAMPBELL.

DEDICATION.

LADY! if for the cold and cloudy clime,
Where I was born, but where I would not die,
Of the great Poet-Sire of Italy
I dare to build the imitative rhyme,
Harsh Runic copy of the South's sublime,
THOU art the cause; and howsoever I
Fall short of his immortal harmony,
Thy gentle heart will pardon me the crime.
Thou, in the pride of Beauty and of Youth,
Spakest; and for thee to speak and be obey'd
Are one; but only in the sunny South
Such sounds are utter'd, and such charms display'd,
So sweet a language from so fair a mouth—
Ah! to what effort would it not persuade?

RAVENNA, *June* 21, 1819.

PREFACE.

IN the course of a visit to the city of Ravenna in the summer of 1819, it was suggested to the author that, having composed something on the subject of Tasso's confinement, he should do the same on Dante's exile,—the tomb of the poet forming one of the principal objects of interest in that city, both to the native and to the stranger.

"On this hint I spake," and the result has been the following four cantos, in terza rima, now offered to the reader. If they are understood and approved, it is my purpose to continue the poem, in various other cantos, to its natural conclusion in the present age. The reader is requested to suppose that Dante addresses him in the interval between the conclusion of the Divina Commedia and his death, and shortly before the latter event, foretelling the fortunes of Italy in general in the ensuing centuries. In adopting this plan I have had in my mind the Cassandra of Lycophron, and the Prophecy of Nereus by Horace, as well

as the Prophecies of Holy Writ. The measure adopted is the terza rima of Dante, which I am not aware to have seen hitherto tried in our language, except it may be by Mr. Hayley, of whose translation I never saw but one extract, quoted in the notes to Caliph Vathek; so that—if I do not err—this poem may be considered as a metrical experiment. The cantos are short, and about the same length of those of the poet, whose name I have borrowed, and most probably taken in vain.

Amongst the inconveniences of authors in the present day, it is difficult for any who have a name, good or bad, to escape translation. I have had the fortune to see the fourth canto of "Childe Harold" translated into Italian versi sciolti,—that is, a poem written in the *Spenserean stanza* into *blank verse*, without regard to the natural divisions of the stanza or of the sense. If the present poem, being on a national topic, should chance to undergo the same fate, I would request the Italian reader to remember that when I have failed in the imitation of his great "Padre Alighier," I have failed in imitating that which all study and few understand, since to this very day it is not yet settled what was the meaning of the allegory in the first canto of the Inferno, unless Count Marchetti's ingenious and probable conjecture may be considered as having decided the question.

He may also pardon my failure the more, as I am not quite sure that he would be pleased with my success, since the Italians, with a pardonable nationality, are particularly jealous of all that is left them as a nation—their literature; and in the present bitterness of the classic and romantic war, are but ill disposed to permit a foreigner even to approve or imitate them, without finding some fault with his ultramontane presumption. I can easily enter into all this, knowing what would be thought in England of an Italian imitator of Milton, or if a translation of Monti, or Pindemonte, or Arici, should be held up to the rising generation as a model for their future poetical essays. But I perceive that I am deviating into an address to the Italian reader, when my business is with the English one; and be they few, or many, I must take my leave of both.

THE PROPHECY OF DANTE.

CANTO THE FIRST.

ONCE more in man's frail world! which I had left
So long that 'twas forgotten; and I feel
The weight of clay again,—too soon bereft
Of the immortal vision which could heal
My earthly sorrows, and to God's own skies
Lift me from that deep gulf without repeal,
Where late my ears rung with the damned cries
Of souls in hopeless bale; and from that place
Of lesser torment, whence men may arise
Pure from the fire to join the angelic race;
'Midst whom my own bright Beatricé * bless'd
My spirit with her light; and to the base
Of the eternal Triad! first, last, best,
Mysterious, three, sole, infinite, great God!
Soul universal! led the mortal guest,
Unblasted by the glory, though he trod
From star to star to reach the almighty throne.
Oh Beatricé! whose sweet limbs the sod
So long hath press'd, and the cold marble stone,
Thou sole pure seraph of my earliest love,
Love so ineffable, and so alone,
That nought on earth could more my bosom move,
And meeting thee in heaven was but to meet
That without which my soul, like the arkless dove,
Had wander'd still in search of, nor her feet
Relieved her wing till found; without thy light
My paradise had still been incomplete.†
Since my tenth sun gave summer to my sight
Thou wert my life, the essence of my thought,
Loved ere I knew the name of love, and bright

* The reader is requested to adopt the Italian pronunciation of Beatrice, [Beatriche,] sounding all the syllables.

† "Che sol per le belle opre
Che fanno in Cielo il sole e l' altre stelle
Dentro di lui, *si crede il Paradiso*,
Così se guardi fiso
Pensar ben dèi ch' ogni terren " piacere.
Canzone, in which Dante describes the person of Beatrice, Strophe third.

Still in these dim old eyes, now overwrought
With the world's war, and years, and banishment,
And tears for thee, by other woes untaught;
For mine is not a nature to be bent
By tyrannous faction, and the brawling crowd,
And though the long, long conflict hath been spent
In vain, and never more, save when the cloud
Which overhangs the Apennine, my mind's eye
Pierces to fancy Florence, once so proud
Of me, can I return, though but to die,
Unto my native soil, they have not yet
Quench'd the old exile's spirit, stern and high.
But the sun, though not overcast, must set,
And the night cometh; I am old in days,
And deeds, and contemplation, and have met
Destruction face to face in all his ways.
The world hath left me, what it found me, pure,
And if I have not gather'd yet its praise,
I sought it not by any baser lure;
Man wrongs, and Time avenges, and my name
May form a monument not all obscure,
Though such was not my ambition's end or aim,
To add to the vainglorious list of those
Who dabble in the pettiness of fame,
And make men's fickle breath the wind that blows
Their sail, and deem it glory to be class'd
With conquerors, and virtue's other foes,
In bloody chronicles of ages past.
I would have had my Florence great and free;*
Oh Florence! Florence! unto me thou wast
Like that Jerusalem which the Almighty He
Wept over, "but thou wouldst not;" as the bird
Gathers its young, I would have gather'd thee
Beneath a parent pinion, hadst thou heard
My voice; but as the adder, deaf and fierce,
Against the breast that cherish'd thee was stirr'd
Thy venom, and my state thou didst amerce,
And doom this body forfeit to the fire.
Alas! how bitter is his country's curse
To him who *for* that country would expire,
But did not merit to expire *by* her,
And loves her, loves her even in her ire!
The day may come when she will cease to err,
The day may come she would be proud to have
The dust she dooms to scatter, and transfer
Of him, whom she denied a home, the grave.
But this shall not be granted; let my dust
Lie where it falls; nor shall the soil which gave
Me breath, but in her sudden fury thrust
Me forth to breathe elsewhere, so reassume

* "L'Esilio che m' è dato onor mi tegno.

Cader tra' buoni è pur di lode degno."

Sonnet of Dante,

in which he represents Right, Generosity, and Temperance as banished from among men, and seeking refuge from Love, who inhabits his bosom.

My indignant bones, because her angry gust
Forsooth is over, and repeal'd her doom;
No,—she denied me what was mine—my roof,
And shall not have what is not hers—my tomb.
Too long her arm'd wrath hath kept aloof
The breast which would have bled for her, the heart
That beat, the mind that was temptation-proof,
The man who fought, toil'd, travell'd, and each part
Of a true citizen fulfill'd, and saw
For his reward, the Guelph's ascendant art
Pass his destruction even into a law.
These things are not made for forgetfulness,
Florence shall be forgotten first; too raw
The wound, too deep the wrong, and the distress
Of such endurance too prolong'd to make
My pardon greater, her injustice less,
Though late repented; yet—yet for her sake
I feel some fonder yearnings, and for thine,
My own Beatrice, I would hardly take
Vengeance upon the land which once was mine,
And still is hallow'd by thy dust's return,
Which would protect the murderess like a shrine,
And save ten thousand foes by thy sole urn.
Though, like old Marius from Minturnæ's marsh
And Carthage ruins, my lone breast may burn
At times with evil feelings hot and harsh,
And sometimes the last pangs of a vile foe
Writhe in a dream before me, and o'erarch
My brow with hopes of triumph,—let them go!
Such are the last infirmities of those
Who long have suffer'd more than mortal woe,
And yet being mortal still have no repose
But on the pillow of Revenge—Revenge,
Who sleeps to dream of blood, and waking glows
With the oft-baffled slakeless thirst of change,
When we shall mount again, and they that trod
Be trampled on, while Death and Até range
O'er humbled heads and sever'd necks—— Great God!
Take these thoughts from me—to thy hands I yield
My many wrongs, and thine almighty rod
Will fall on those who smote me,—be my shield!
As thou hast been in peril, and in pain,
In turbulent cities, and the tented field—
In toil, and many troubles borne in vain
For Florence.—I appeal from her to Thee!
Thee whom I late saw in thy loftiest reign,
Even in that glorious vision, which to see
And live was never granted until now,
And yet thou hast permitted this to me.
Alas! with what a weight upon my brow
The sense of earth and earthly things come back,
Corrosive passions, feelings dull and low,
The heart's quick throb upon the mental rack,
Long day, and dreary night; the retrospect
Of half a century bloody and black,

And the frail few years I may yet expect
Hoary and hopeless, but less hard to bear,
For I have been too long and deeply wreck'd
On the lone rock of desolate Despair,
To lift my eyes more to the passing sail
Which shuns that reef so horrible and bare;
Nor raise my voice—for who would heed my wail?
I am not of this people, nor this age,
And yet my harpings will unfold a tale
Which shall preserve these times when not a page
Of their perturbed annals could attract
An eye to gaze upon their civil rage,
Did not my verse embalm full many an act
Worthless as they who wrought it: 'tis the doom
Of spirits of my order to be rack'd
In life, to wear their hearts out, and consume
Their days in endless strife, and die alone;
Then future thousands crowd around their tomb,
And pilgrims come from climes where they have known
The name of him—who now is but a name.
And wasting homage o'er the sullen stone,
Spread his—by him unheard, unheeded—fame;
And mine at least hath cost me dear: to die
Is nothing; but to wither thus—to tame
My mind down from its own infinity—
To live in narrow ways with little men,
A common sight to every common eye,
A wanderer, while even wolves can find a den,
Ripp'd from all kindred, from all home, all things
That make communion sweet, and soften pain—
To feel me in the solitude of kings
Without the power that makes them bear a crown—
To envy every dove his nest and wings
Which waft him where the Apennine looks down
On Arno, till he perches, it may be,
Within my all inexorable town,
Where yet my boys are, and that fatal she,*
Their mother, the cold partner who hath brought
Destruction for a dowry—this to see

* This lady, whose name was *Gemma*, sprung from one of the most powerful Guelph families named Donati. Corso Donati was the principal adversary of the Ghibellines. She is described as being "*Admodum morosa, ut de Xantippe Socratis philosophi conjuge scripsum esse legimus*," according to Giannozzo Manetti. But Lionardo Aretino is scandalized with Boccace, in his Life of Dante, for saying that literary men should not marry. "Qui il Boccaccio non ha pazienza, e dice, le mogli esser contrarie agli studj: e non si ricorda che Socrate il più nobile filosofo che mai fosse, ebbe moglie e figliuoli e uffici della Repubblica nella sua Città; e Aristotele che, &c., &c., ebbe due mogli in varj tempi, ed ebbe figliuoli, e ricchezze assai.—E Marco Tullio—e Catone—e Varrone—e Seneca—ebbero moglie," &c., &c. It is odd that honest Lionardo's examples, with the exception of Seneca, and, for anything I know, Aristotle, are not the most felicitous. Tully's Terentia, and Socrates' Xantippe, by no means contributed to their husbands' happiness, whatever they might do to their philosophy; Cato gave away his wife; of Varro's we know nothing; and of Seneca's, only that she was disposed to die with him, but recovered and lived several years afterwards. But says Lionardo, "L'uomo è *animale civile*, secondo piace a tutti i filosofi." And thence concludes that the greatest proof of the *animal's civism* is "la prima congiunzione, dalla quale multiplicata nasce la Città."

And feel, and know without repair, hath taught
A bitter lesson; but it leaves me free:
I have not vilely found, nor basely sought,
They made an Exile—not a slave of me.

CANTO THE SECOND.

The Spirit of the fervent days of Old,
When words were things that came to pass, and thought
Flash'd o'er the future, bidding men behold
Their children's children's doom already brought
Forth from the abyss of time which is to be,
The chaos of events, where lie half-wrought
Shapes that must undergo mortality;
What the great Seers of Israel wore within,
That spirit was on them, and is on me;
And if, Cassandra-like, amidst the din
Of conflict none will hear, or hearing heed
This voice from out the Wilderness, the sin
Be theirs, and my own feelings be my meed,
The only guerdon I have ever known.
Hast thou not bled? and hast thou still to bleed,
Italia? Ah! to me such things, foreshown
With dim sepulchral light, bid me forget
In thine irreparable wrongs my own;
We can have but one country, and even yet
Thou'rt mine—my bones shall be within thy breast,
My soul within thy language, which once set
With our old Roman sway in the wide West;
But I will make another tongue arise
As lofty and more sweet, in which express'd
The hero's ardor, or the lover's sighs,
Shall find alike such sounds for every theme,
That every word, as brilliant as thy skies,
Shall realize a poet's proudest dream,
And make thee Europe's nightingale of song;
So that all present speech to thine shall seem
The note of meaner birds, and every tongue
Confess its barbarism when compared with thine.
This shalt thou owe to him thou didst so wrong,
Thy Tuscan bard, the banish'd Ghibelline.
Woe! woe! the veil of coming centuries
Is rent,—a thousand years which yet supine
Lie like the ocean waves ere winds arise,
Heaving in dark and sullen undulation,
Float from eternity into these eyes;
The storms yet sleep, the clouds still keep their station,
The unborn earthquake yet is in the womb,
The bloody chaos yet expects creation,
But all things are disposing for thy doom;
The elements await but for the word,
"Let there be darkness!" and thou grow'st a tomb!
Yes! thou, so beautiful, shalt feel the sword,
Thou, Italy! so fair that Paradise,
Revived in thee, blooms forth to man restored:

Ah! must the sons of Adam lose it twice?
Thou, Italy! whose ever-golden fields,
Plough'd by the sunbeams solely, would suffice
For the world's granary; thou, whose sky heaven gilds
With brighter stars, and robes with deeper blue;
Thou, in whose pleasant places Summer builds
Her palace, in whose cradle Empire grew,
And form'd the Eternal City's ornaments
From spoils of kings whom freemen overthrew:
Birthplace of heroes, sanctuary of saints,
Where earthly first, then heavenly glory made
Her home; thou, all which fondest fancy paints,
And finds her prior vision but portray'd
In feeble colors, when the eye—from the Alp
Of horrid snow, and rock, and shaggy shade
Of desert-loving pine, whose emerald scalp
Nods to the storm—dilates and dotes o'er thee,
And wistfully implores, as 'twere for help
To see thy sunny fields, my Italy,
Nearer and nearer yet, and dearer still
The more approach'd, and dearest were they free.
Thou—thou must wither to each tyrant's will:
The Goth hath been,—the German, Frank, and Hun
Are yet to come,—and on the imperial hill
Ruin, already proud of the deeds done
By the old barbarians, there awaits the new,
Throned on the Palatine, while lost and won
Rome at her feet lies bleeding; and the hue
Of human sacrifice and Roman slaughter
Troubles the clotted air, of late so blue,
And deepens into red the saffron water
Of Tiber, thick with dead; the helpless priest,
And still more helpless nor less holy daughter,
Vow'd to their God, have shrieking fled, and ceased
Their ministry: the nations take their prey.
Iberian, Almain, Lombard, and the beast
And bird, wolf, vulture, more humane than they
Are; these but gorge the flesh and lap the gore
Of the departed, and then go their way;
But those, the human savages, explore
All paths of torture, and insatiate yet,
With Ugolino hunger prowl for more.
Nine moons shall rise o'er scenes like this and set;*
The chiefless army of the dead, which late
Beneath the traitor Prince's banner met,
Hath left its leader's ashes at the gate;
Had but the royal Rebel lived, perchance
Thou hadst been spared, but his involved thy fate.
Oh! Rome, the spoiler of the spoil of France,
From Brennus to the Bourbon, never, never
Shall foreign standard to thy walls advance
But Tiber shall become a mournful river.
Oh! when the strangers pass the Alps and Po,
Crush them, ye rocks! floods whelm them, and for ever!

* See "Sacco di Roma," generally attributed to Guicciardini. There is another written by a Jacopo *Buonaparte*.

Why sleep the idle avalanches so,
To topple on the lonely pilgrim's head?
Why doth Eridanus but overflow
The peasant's harvest from his turbid bed?
Were not each barbarous horde a nobler prey?
Over Cambyses' host the desert spread
Her sandy ocean, and the sea-waves' sway
Roll'd over Pharaoh and his thousands,—why,
Mountains and waters, do ye not as they?
And you, ye men! Romans who dare not die,
Sons of the conquerors who overthrew
Those who o'erthrew proud Xerxes, where yet lie
The dead whose tomb Oblivion never knew,
Are the Alps weaker than Thermopylæ?
Their passes more alluring to the view
Of an invader? is it they, or ye,
That to each host the mountain-gate unbar,
And leave the march in peace, the passage free?
Why, Nature's self detains the victor's car,
And makes your land impregnable, if earth
Could be so; but alone she will not war,
Yet aids the warrior worthy of his birth
In a soil where the mothers bring forth men:
Not so with those whose souls are little worth;
For them no fortress can avail,—the den
Of the poor reptile which preserves its sting
Is more secure than walls of adamant, when
The hearts of those within are quivering.
Are ye not brave? Yes, yet the Ausonian soil
Hath hearts, and hands, and arms, and hosts to bring
Against Oppression; but how vain the toil,
While still Division sows the seeds of woe
And weakness, till the stranger reaps the spoil.
Oh! my own beauteous land! so long laid low,
So long the grave of thy own children's hopes,
When there is but required a single blow
To break the chain, yet—yet the Avenger stops,
And Doubt and Discord step 'twixt thine and thee,
And join their strength to that which with thee copes;
What is there wanting then to set thee free,
And show thy beauty in its fullest light?
To make the Alps impassable; and we,
Her sons, may do this with *one* deed—Unite.

CANTO THE THIRD.

From out the mass of never-dying ill,
The Plague, the Prince, the Stranger, and the Sword,
Vials of wrath but emptied to refill
And flow again, I cannot all record
That crowds on my prophetic eye: the earth
And ocean written o'er would not afford
Space for the annal, yet it shall go forth;
Yes, all, though not by human pen, is graven,
There where the farthest suns and stars have birth,

Spread like a banner at the gate of heaven,
The bloody scroll of our millennial wrongs
Waves, and the echo of our groans is driven
Athwart the sound of archangelic songs,
And Italy, the martyr'd nation's gore,
Will not in vain arise to where belongs
Omnipotence and mercy evermore:
Like to a harp-string stricken by the wind,
The sound of her lament shall, rising o'er
The seraph voices, touch the Almighty Mind.
Meantime I, humblest of thy sons, and of
Earth's dust by immortality refined
To sense and suffering, though the vain may scoff,
And tyrants threat, and meeker victims bow
Before the storm because its breath is rough,
To thee, my country! whom before, as now,
I loved and love, devote the mournful lyre
And melancholy gift high powers allow
To read the future; and if now my fire
Is not as once it shone o'er thee, forgive!
I but foretell thy fortunes—then expire;
Think not that I would look on them and live.
A spirit forces me to see and speak,
And for my guerdon grants *not* to survive;
My heart shall be pour'd over thee and break:
Yet for a moment, ere I must resume
Thy sable web of sorrow, let me take
Over the gleams that flash athwart thy gloom
A softer glimpse; some stars shine through thy night,
And many meteors, and above thy tomb
Leans sculptured Beauty, which Death cannot blight;
And from thine ashes boundless spirits rise
To give thee honor and the earth delight;
Thy soil shall still be pregnant with the wise,
The gay, the learn'd, the generous, and the brave,
Native to thee as summer to thy skies,
Conquerors on foreign shores, and the far wave,*
Discoverers of new worlds, which take their name;†
For *thee* alone they have no arm to save,
And all thy recompense is in their fame,
A noble one to them, but not to thee—
Shall they be glorious, and thou still the same?
Oh! more than these illustrious far shall be
The being—and even yet he may be born—
The mortal savior who shall set thee free,
And see thy diadem, so changed and worn
By fresh barbarians, on thy brow replaced;
And the sweet sun replenishing thy morn,
Thy moral morn, too long with clouds defaced,
And noxious vapors from Avernus risen,
Such as all they must breathe who are debased
By servitude, and have the mind in prison.
Yet through this centuried eclipse of woe

* Alexander of Parma, Spinola, Pescara, Eugene of Savoy, Montecucco.
† Columbus, Americus Vespucius, Sebastian Cabot.

Some voices shall be heard, and earth shall listen;
Poets shall follow in the path I show,
And make it broader: the same brilliant sky
Which cheers the birds to song shall bid them glow,
And raise their notes as natural and high;
Tuneful shall be their numbers; they shall sing
Many of love, and some of liberty,
But few shall soar upon that eagle's wing,
And look in the sun's face with eagle's gaze,
All free and fearless as the feather'd king,
But fly more near the earth; how many a phrase
Sublime shall lavish'd be on some small prince
In all the prodigality of praise!
And language, eloquently false, evince
The harlotry of genius, which, like beauty,
Too oft forgets its own self-reverence,
And looks on prostitution as a duty.
He who once enters in a tyrant's hall*
As guest is slave, his thoughts become a booty,
And the first day which sees the chains enthrall
A captive, sees his half of manhood gone—†
The soul's emasculation saddens all
His spirit; thus the Bard too near the throne
Quails from his inspiration, bound to *please*,—
How servile is the task to please alone!
To smooth the verse to suit his sovereign's ease
And royal leisure, nor too much prolong
Aught save his eulogy, and find, and seize,
Or force, or forge fit argument of song!
Thus trammell'd, thus condemn'd to Flattery's trebles,
He toils through all, still trembling to be wrong:
For fear some noble thoughts, like heavenly rebels,
Should rise up in high treason to his brain.
He sings as the Athenian spoke, with pebbles
In 's mouth, lest truth should stammer through his strain.
But out of the long file of sonneteers
There shall be some who will not sing in vain,
And he, their prince, shall rank among my peers,‡
And love shall be his torment; but his grief
Shall make an immortality of tears,
And Italy shall hail him as the Chief
Of Poet-lovers, and his higher song
Of Freedom wreathe him with as green a leaf.
But in a farther age shall rise along
The banks of Po two greater still than he;
The world which smiled on him shall do them wrong
Till they are ashes, and repose with me.
The first will make an epoch of his lyre,
And fill the earth with feats of chivalry:
His fancy like a rainbow, and his fire,
Like that of Heaven, immortal, and his thought
Borne onward with a wing that cannot tire:

* A verse from the Greek tragedians, with which Pompey took leave o. Cornelia on entering the boat in which he was slain.
† The verse and sentiment are taken from Homer.
‡ Petrarch.

Pleasure shall, like a butterfly new caught,
Flutter her lovely pinions o'er his theme,
And Art itself seem into Nature wrought
By the transparency of his bright dream.—
The second, of a tenderer, sadder mood,
Shall pour his soul out o'er Jerusalem;
He, too, shall sing of arms, and Christian blood
Shed where Christ bled for man; and his high harp
Shall, by the willow over Jordan's flood,
Revive a song of Sion, and the sharp
Conflict, and final triumph of the brave
And pious, and the strife of hell to warp
Their hearts from their great purpose, until wave
The red-cross banners where the first red Cross
Was crimson'd from his veins who died to save,
Shall be his sacred argument; the loss
Of years, of favor, freedom, even of fame
Contested for a time, while the smooth gloss
Of courts would slide o'er his forgotten name,
And call captivity a kindness, meant
To shield him from insanity or shame:
Such shall be his meet guerdon! who was sent
To be Christ's Laureate—they reward him well!
Florence dooms me but death or banishment,
Ferrara him a pittance and a cell,
Harder to bear, and less deserved, for I
Had stung the factions which I strove to quell;
But this meek man, who with a lover's eye
Will look on earth and heaven, and who will deign
To embalm with his celestial flattery,
As poor a thing as e'er was spawn'd to reign,
What will *he* do to merit such a doom?
Perhaps he'll *love*,—and is not love in vain
Torture enough without a living tomb?
Yet it will be so—he and his compeer,
The Bard of Chivalry, will both consume
In penury and pain too many a year,
And, dying in despondency, bequeath
To the kind world, which scarce will yield a tear,
A heritage enriching all who breathe
With the wealth of a genuine poet's soul,
And to their country a redoubled wreath,
Unmatch'd by time; not Hellas can unroll
Through her olympiads two such names, though one
Of hers be mighty,—and is this the whole
Of such men's destiny beneath the sun?
Must all the finer thoughts, the thrilling sense,
The electric blood with which their arteries run,
Their body's self turn'd soul with the intense
Feeling of that which is, and fancy of
That which should be, to such a recompense
Conduct? shall their bright plumage on the rough
Storm be still scatter'd? Yes, and it must be,
For, form'd of far too penetrable stuff,
These birds of Paradise but long to flee
Back to their native mansion, soon they find

Earth's mist with their pure pinions not agree.
And die or are degraded; for the mind
Succumbs to long infection, and despair,
And vulture passions flying close behind,
Await the moment to assail and tear;
And when at length the winged wanderers stoop,
Then is the prey-bird's triumph, then they share
The spoil, o'erpower'd at length by one fell swoop.
Yet some have been untouch'd, who learn'd to bear,
Some whom no power could ever force to droop,
Who could resist themselves even, hardest care!
And task most hopeless; but some such have been,
And if my name amongst the number were,
That destiny austere, and yet serene,
Were prouder than more dazzling fame unbless'd.
The Alp's snow summit nearer heaven is seen
Than the volcano's fierce eruptive crest,
Whose splendor from the black abyss is flung,
While the scorch'd mountain, from whose burning breast
A temporary torturing flame is wrung,
Shines for a night of terror, then repels
Its fire back to the hell from whence it sprung,
The hell which in its entrails ever dwells.

CANTO THE FOURTH.

Many are poets who have never penn'd
Their inspiration, and perchance the best:
They felt, and loved, and died, but would not lend
Their thoughts to meaner beings; they compress'd
The god within them, and rejoin'd the stars
Unlaurell'd upon earth, but far more bless'd
Than those who are degraded by the jars
Of passion, and their frailties link'd to fame,
Conquerors of high renown, but full of scars.
Many are poets but without the name,
For what is poesy but to create
From overfeeling good or ill; and aim
At an external life beyond our fate,
And be the new Prometheus of new men,
Bestowing fire from heaven, and then, too late,
Finding the pleasure given repaid with pain,
And vultures to the heart of the bestower,
Who, having lavish'd his high gift in vain,
Lies chain'd to his lone rock by the sea-shore?
So be it: we can bear.—But thus all they
Whose intellect is an o'ermastering power
Which still recoils from its encumbering clay
Or lightens it to spirit, whatsoe'er
The form which their creations may essay,
Are bards; the kindled marble's bust may wear
More poesy upon its speaking brow
Than aught less than the Homeric page may bear;
One noble stroke with a whole life may glow,
Or deify the canvas till it shine
With beauty so surpassing all below,

That they who kneel to idols so divine
Break no commandment, for high heaven is there
Transfused, transfigurated: and the line
Of poesy, which peoples but the air
With thought and beings of our thought reflected,
Can do no more: then let the artist share
The palm, he shares the peril, and dejected
Faints o'er the labor unapproved—Alas!
Despair and Genius are too oft connected.
Within the ages which before me pass
Art shall resume and equal even the sway
Which with Apelles and old Phidias
She held in Hellas' unforgotten day.
Ye shall be taught by Ruin to revive
The Grecian forms at least from their decay,
And Roman souls at last again shall live
In Roman works wrought by Italian hands,
And temples, loftier than the old temples, give
New wonders to the world; and while still stands
The austere Pantheon, into heaven shall soar
A dome, its image, while the base expands *
Into a fane surpassing all before,
Such as all flesh shall flock to kneel in: ne'er
Such sight hath been unfolded by a door
As this, to which all nations shall repair
And lay their sins at this huge gate of heaven.
And the bold Architect unto whose care
The daring charge to raise it shall be given,
Whom all hearts shall acknowledge as their lord,
Whether into the marble chaos driven
His chisel bid the Hebrew, at whose word †
Israel left Egypt, stop the waves in stone,
Or hues of Hell be by his pencil pour'd
Over the damn'd before the Judgment-throne,‡
Such as I saw them, such as all shall see,
Or fanes be built of grandeur yet unknown,
The stream of his great thoughts shall spring from me,§

* The Cupola of St. Peter's.

† The statue of Moses on the monument of Julius II.

SONETTO.

Di Giovanni Battista Zappi.

Chi è costui, che in dura pietra scolto,
Siede gigante; e le più illustre, e conte
Opre dell' arte avvanza, e ha vive, e pronte
Le labbia sì, che le parole ascolto?
Quest' è Mosè; ben me 'l diceva il folto
Onor del mento, e 'l doppio raggio in fronte,
Quest' è Mosè, quando scendea del monte,
E gran parte del Nume avea nel volto.
Tal era allor, che le sonanti, e vaste
Acque ei sospese a se d' intorno, e tale
Quando il mar chiuse, e ne fè tomba altrui.
E voi sue turbe un rio vitello alzaste?
Alzata aveste imago a questa eguale!
Ch' era men fallo l' adorer costui.

‡ The Last Judgment, in the Sistine Chapel.

§ I have read somewhere (if I do not err, for I cannot recollect where), that Dante was so great a favorite of Michael Angelo's, that he had designed the whole of the Divina Commedia; but that the volume containing these studies was lost by sea.

The Ghibelline, who traversed the three realms
Which form the empire of eternity.
Amidst the clash of swords, and clang of helms,
The age which I anticipate, no less
Shall be the Age of Beauty, and while whelms
Calamity the nations with distress,
The genius of my country shall arise,
The Cedar towering o'er the Wilderness,
Lovely in all its branches to all eyes,
Fragrant as fair, and recognized afar,
Wafting its native incense through the skies.
Sovereigns shall pause amidst their sport of war,
Wean'd for an hour from blood, to turn and gaze
On canvas or on stone; and they who mar
All beauty upon earth, compell'd to praise,
Shall feel the power of that which they destroy;
And Art's mistaken gratitude shall raise
To tyrants who but take her for a toy,
Emblems and monuments, and prostitute
Her charms to pontiffs proud,* who but employ
The man of genius as the meanest brute
To bear a burden, and to serve a need,
To sell his labors, and his soul to boot.
Who toils for nations may be poor indeed,
But free; who sweats for monarchs is no more
Than the gilt chamberlain, who, clothed and fee'd,
Stands sleek and slavish, bowing at his door.
Oh, Power that rulest and inspirest! how
Is it that they on earth, whose earthly power
Is likest thine in heaven in outward show,
Least like to thee in attributes divine,
Tread on the universal necks that bow,
And then assure us that their rights are thine?
And how is it that they, the sons of fame,
Whose inspiration seems to them to shine
From high, they whom the nations oftest name,
Must pass their days in penury or pain,
Or step to grandeur through the paths of shame,
And wear a deeper brand and gaudier chain?
Or if their destiny be born aloof
From lowliness, or tempted thence in vain,
In their own souls sustain a harder proof,
The inner war of passions deep and fierce?
Florence! when thy harsh sentence razed my roof,
I loved thee, but the vengeance of my verse,
The hate of injuries which every year
Makes greater, and accumulates my curse,
Shall live, outliving all thou holdest dear,
Thy pride, thy wealth, thy freedom, and even *that*,
The most infernal of all evils here,
The sway of petty tyrants in a state;
For such sway is not limited to kings,
And demagogues yield to them but in date,
As swept off sooner; in all deadly things,

* See the treatment of Michael Angelo by Julius II., and his neglect by Leo X.

Which make men hate themselves, and one another,
In discord, cowardice, cruelty, all that springs
From Death the Sin-born's incest with his mother,
In rank oppression in its rudest shape,
The faction Chief is but the Sultan's brother,
And the worst despot's far less human ape:
Florence! when this lone spirit, which so long
Yearn'd, as the captive toiling at escape,
To fly back to thee in despite of wrong,
An exile, saddest of all prisoners,
Who has the whole world for a dungeon strong,
Seas, mountains, and the horizon's verge for bars,
Which shut him from the sole small spot of earth,
Where—whatsoe'er his fate—he still were hers,
His country's, and might die where he had birth—
Florence! when this lone spirit shall return
To kindred spirits, thou wilt feel my worth,
And seek to honor with an empty urn
The ashes thou shalt ne'er obtain—Alas!
"What have I done to thee, my people?"* Stern
Are all thy dealings, but in this they pass
The limits of man's common malice, for
All that a citizen could be, I was;
Raised by thy will, all thine in peace or war,
And for this thou hast warr'd with me—'Tis done:
I may not overleap the eternal bar
Built up between us, and will die alone,
Beholding with the dark eye of a seer
The evil days to gifted souls foreshown,
Foretelling them to those who will not hear,
As in the old time, till the hour be come
When truth shall strike their eyes through many a tear,
And make them own the Prophet in his tomb.

* "E scrisse più volte non solamente a particolari cittadini del reggimento ma ancora al popolo, e intra l' altre una Epistola assai lunga che comincia: *Populi mi, quid feci tibi?*"—*Vita di Dante scritta da Lionardo Avetino.*

FRANCESCA OF RIMINI.*

WRITTEN 1820. PUBLISHED 1830.

FROM THE INFERNO OF DANTE.

CANTO THE FIFTH.

"THE land where I was born sits by the seas,†
Upon that shore to which the Po descends,
With all his followers, in search of peace.
Love, which the gentle heart soon apprehends,
Seized him for the fair person which was ta'en
From me, and me even yet the mode offends.
Love, who to none beloved to love again
Remits, seized me with wish to please, so strong,
That, as thou seest, yet, yet it doth remain.
Love to one death conducted us along,
But Caïnà ‡ waits for him our life who ended:"
These were the accents utter'd by her tongue.—
Since I first listen'd to these souls offended,
I bow'd my visage, and so kept it till—
"What think'st thou?" said the bard; when I unbended,
And recommenced: "Alas! unto such ill
How many sweet thoughts, what strong ecstasies,
Led these their evil fortune to fulfil!"
And then I turn'd unto their side my eyes,
And said, "Francesca, thy sad destinies
Have made me sorrow till the tears arise.
But tell me, in the season of sweet sighs,
By what and how thy love to passion rose,
So as his dim desires to recognize?"
Then she to me: "The greatest of all woes

* Francesca, daughter of Guido, Lord of Ravenna, was given by her father in marriage to Lanciotto, Lord of Rimini, a man hideously deformed. Afraid of disgusting his bride, Lanciotto resolved to be married by proxy; and sent as his representative his brother Paolo, who was the handsomest and most accomplished cavalier in Italy. He engaged the bride's affections, and they were both put to death, afterwards, by the enraged husband. The father of the unhappy lady was the friend and protector of Dante.

† Ravenna.

‡ The place where the souls of fratricides suffer.

Is to remind us of our happy days
In misery, and that thy teacher knows.
But if to learn our passion's first root preys
Upon thy spirit with such sympathy,
I will do even as he who weeps and says.
We read one day for pastime, seated nigh,
Of Lancilot, how love enchain'd him too.
We were alone, quite unsuspiciously.
But oft our eyes met, and our cheeks in hue
All o'er discolor'd by that reading were;
But one point only wholly us o'erthrew:
When we read the long-sigh'd-for smile of her,
To be thus kiss'd by such devoted lover,
He who from me can be divided ne'er
Kiss'd my mouth, trembling in the act all over:
Accursed was the book and he who wrote!
That day no further leaf we did uncover."—
While thus one spirit told us of their lot,
The other wept, so that with pity's thralls
I swoon'd, as if by death I had been smote,
And fell down even as a dead body falls.

HEBREW MELODIES.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE subsequent poems were written at the request of my friend, the Hon. Douglas Kinnaird, for a Selection of Hebrew Melodies, and have been published, with the music, arranged by Mr. Braham and Mr. Nathan.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY.

SHE walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies:
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impair'd the nameless grace,
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express,
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

THE HARP THE MONARCH MINSTREL SWEPT.

THE harp the monarch minstrel swept,
The King of men, the loved of Heaven,
Which Music hallow'd while she wept
O'er tones her heart of hearts had given,
Redoubled be her tears, its chords are riven!
It soften'd men of iron mould,
It gave them virtues not their own;
No ear so dull, no soul so cold,
That felt not, fired not to the tone,
Till David's lyre grew mightier than his throne.

It told the triumphs of our King,
  It wafted glory to our God;
It made our gladden'd valleys ring,
  The cedars bow, the mountains nod;
  Its sound aspired to heaven, and there abode!
Since then, though heard on earth no more,
  Devotion, and her daughter Love,
Still bid the bursting spirit soar
  To sounds that seem as from above,
  In dreams that day's broad light cannot remove.

IF THAT HIGH WORLD.

If that high world, which lies beyond
  Our own, surviving Love endears;
If there the cherish'd heart be fond,
  The eye the same, except in tears—
How welcome those untrodden spheres!
  How sweet this very hour to die!
To soar from earth, and find all fears
  Lost in thy light—Eternity!

It must be so: 'tis not for self
  That we so tremble on the brink;
And striving to o'erleap the gulf,
  Yet cling to Being's severing link.
Oh! in that future let us think
  To hold each heart the heart that shares,
With them the immortal waters drink,
  And soul in soul grow deathless theirs!

THE WILD GAZELLE.

The wild gazelle on Judah's hills
  Exulting yet may bound,
And drink from all the living rills
  That gush on holy ground;
Its airy step and glorious eye
May glance in tameless transport by:—

A step as fleet, an eye more bright,
  Hath Judah witness'd there;
And o'er her scenes of lost delight
  Inhabitants more fair.
The cedars wave on Lebanon,
But Judah's statelier maids are gone!

More blest each palm that shades those plains
  Than Israel's scatter'd race;
For, taking root, it there remains
  In solitary grace:
It cannot quit its place of birth,
It will not live in other earth.

JEPTHA'S DAUGHTER. — Page 329.

But we must wander witheringly,
In other lands to die;
And where our fathers' ashes be,
Our own may never lie:
Our temple hath not left a stone,
And Mockery sits on Salem's throne.

OH! WEEP FOR THOSE.

Oh! weep for those that wept by Babel's stream,
Whose shrines are desolate, whose land a dream;
Weep for the harp of Judah's broken shell;
Mourn—where their God hath dwelt the Godless dwell!

And where shall Israel lave her bleeding feet?
And when shall Zion's songs again seem sweet?
And Judah's melody once more rejoice
The hearts that leap'd before its heavenly voice?

Tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast,
How shall ye flee away and be at rest?
The wild-dove hath her nest, the fox his cave,
Mankind their country—Israel but the grave!

ON JORDAN'S BANKS.

On Jordan's banks the Arab's camels stray,
On Sion's hill the False One's votaries pray,
The Baal-adorer bows on Sinai's steep—
Yet there—even there—O God! Thy thunders sleep:

There—where Thy finger scorch'd the tablet stone!
There—where Thy shadow to Thy people shone!
Thy glory shrouded in its garb of fire:
Thyself—none living see and not expire!

Oh! in the lightning let Thy glance appear;
Sweep from his shiver'd hand the oppressor's spear:
How long by tyrants shall Thy land be trod!
How long Thy temple worshipless, O God!

JEPHTHA'S DAUGHTER.

Since our Country, our God—oh, my sire!
Demand that thy daughter expire;
Since thy triumph was bought by thy vow—
Strike the bosom that's bared for thee now!

And the voice of my mourning is o'er,
And the mountains behold me no more:
If the hand that I love lay me low,
There cannot be pain in the blow!

And of this, oh, my father! be sure—
That the blood of thy child is as pure
As the blessing I beg ere it flow,
And the last thought that soothes me below.

Though the virgins of Salem lament,
Be the judge and the hero unbent!
I have won the great battle for thee,
And my father and country are free!

When this blood of thy giving hath gush'd,
When the voice that thou lovest is hush'd,
Let my memory still be thy pride,
And forget not I smiled as I died!

OH! SNATCH'D AWAY IN BEAUTY'S BLOOM.

Oh! snatch'd away in beauty's bloom,
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb;
But on thy turf shall roses rear
Their leaves, the earliest of the year,
And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom!

And oft by yon blue gushing stream
Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,
And feed deep thought with many a dream,
And lingering pause and lightly tread;
Fond wretch! as if her step disturb'd the dead!

Away! ye know that tears are vain,
That death nor heeds nor hears distress:
Will this unteach us to complain?
Or make one mourner weep the less?
And thou—who tell'st me to forget
Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

MY SOUL IS DARK.

My soul is dark—oh! quickly string
The harp I yet can brook to hear;
And let thy gentle fingers fling
Its melting murmurs o'er mine ear.
If in this heart a hope be dear,
That sound shall charm it forth again:
If in these eyes there lurk a tear,
'Twill flow, and cease to burn my brain.

But bid the strain be wild and deep,
Nor let thy notes of joy be first:
I tell thee, minstrel, I must weep,
Or else this heavy heart shall burst;
For it hath been by sorrow nursed,
And ached in sleepless silence long;
And now 'tis doom'd to know the worst,
And break at once—or yield to song.

I SAW THEE WEEP.

I saw thee weep—the big bright tear
Came o'er that eye of blue!
And then methought it did appear
A violet dropping dew:

I saw thee smile—the sapphire's blaze
Beside thee ceased to shine;
It could not match the living rays
That fill'd that glance of thine.

As clouds from yonder sun receive
A deep and mellow dye,
Which scarce the shade of coming eve
Can banish from the sky,
Those smiles unto the moodiest mind
Their own pure joy impart;
Their sunshine leaves a glow behind
That lightens o'er the heart.

THY DAYS ARE DONE.

Thy days are done, thy fame begun;
Thy country's strains record
The triumphs of her chosen Son,
The slaughters of his sword;
The deeds he did, the fields he won,
The freedom he restored!

Though thou art fall'n, while we are free
Thou shalt not taste of death!
The generous blood that flow'd from thee
Disdain'd to sink beneath:
Within our veins its currents be,
Thy spirit on our breath!

Thy name, our charging hosts along,
Shall be the battle-word!
Thy fall, the theme of choral song
From virgin voices pour'd!
To weep would do thy glory wrong;
Thou shalt not be deplored.

SONG OF SAUL BEFORE HIS LAST BATTLE.

Warriors and chiefs! should the shaft or the sword
Pierce me in leading the host of the Lord,
Heed not the corse, though a king's, in your path:
Bury your steel in the bosoms of Gath!

Thou who art bearing my buckler and bow,
Should the soldiers of Saul look away from the foe,
Stretch me that moment in blood at thy feet!
Mine be the doom which they dared not to meet.

Farewell to others, but never we part,
Heir to my royalty, son of my heart!
Bright is the diadem, boundless the sway,
Or kingly the death, which awaits us to-day.

SAUL.

THOU whose spell can raise the dead,
Bid the prophet's form appear.
"Samuel, raise thy buried head!
King, behold the phantom seer!"

Earth yawn'd; he stood the centre of a cloud:
Light changed its hue, retiring from his shroud.
Death stood all glassy in his fixed eye;
His hand was wither'd, and his veins were dry;
His foot, in bony whiteness, glitter'd there,
Shrunken and sinewless, and ghastly bare;
From lips that moved not, and unbreathing frame,
Like cavern'd winds, the hollow accents came.
Saul saw, and fell to earth, as falls the oak,
At once, and blasted by the thunder-stroke.

"Why is my sleep disquieted?
Who is he that calls the dead?
Is it thou, O King? Behold,
Bloodless are these limbs, and cold:
Such are mine; and such shall be
Thine to-morrow, when with me:
Ere the coming day is done,
Such shalt thou be, such thy son.
Fare thee well, but for a day,
Then we mix our mouldering clay.
Thou, thy race, lie pale and low,
Pierced by shafts of many a bow;
And the falchion by thy side
To thy heart thy hand shall guide:
Crownless, breathless, headless fall,
Son and sire, the house of Saul."

"ALL IS VANITY, SAITH THE PREACHER."

FAME, wisdom, love, and power were mine,
And health and youth possess'd me;
My goblets blush'd from every vine,
And lovely forms caress'd me;
I sunn'd my heart in beauty's eyes,
And felt my soul grow tender;
All earth can give, or mortal prize,
Was mine of regal splendor.

I strive to number o'er what days
Remembrance can discover,
Which all that life or earth displays
Would lure me to live over.
There rose no day, there roll'd no hour
Of pleasure unembitter'd;
And not a trapping deck'd my power
That gall'd not while it glitter'd.

The serpent of the field, by art
And spells, is won from harming;

But that which coils around the heart,
Oh! who hath power of charming?
It will not list to wisdom's lore,
Nor music's voice can lure it;
But there it stings for evermore
The soul that must endure it.

WHEN COLDNESS WRAPS THIS SUFFERING CLAY.

When coldness wraps this suffering clay,
Ah! whither strays the immortal mind?
It cannot die, it cannot stray,
But leaves its darken'd dust behind.
Then, unembodied, doth it trace
By steps each planet's heavenly way?
Or fill at once the realms of space,
A thing of eyes, that all survey?

Eternal, boundless, undecay'd,
A thought unseen, but seeing all,
All, all in earth or skies display'd
Shall it survey, shall it recall:
Each fainter trace that memory holds
So darkly of departed years,
In one broad glance the soul beholds,
And all that was at once appears.

Before Creation peopled earth,
Its eye shall roll through chaos back;
And where the farthest heaven had birth,
The spirit trace its rising track;
And where the future mars or makes,
Its glance dilate o'er all to be,
While sun is quench'd or system breaks,
Fix'd in its own eternity.

Above or Love, Hope, Hate, or Fear,
It lives all passionless and pure:
An age shall fleet like earthly year:
Its years as moments shall endure.
Away, away, without a wing,
O'er all, through all, its thought shall fly:
A nameless and eternal thing,
Forgetting what it was to die.

VISION OF BELSHAZZAR.

The King was on his throne,
The Satraps throng'd the hall.
A thousand bright lamps shone
O'er that high festival.
A thousand cups of gold,
In Judah deem'd divine—
Jehovah's vessels hold
The godless Heathen's wine.

In that same hour and hall,
The fingers of a hand
Came forth against the wall,
And wrote as if on sand:
The fingers of a man;—
A solitary hand
Along the letters ran,
And traced them like a wand.

The monarch saw, and shook,
And bade no more rejoice;
All bloodless wax'd his look,
And tremulous his voice.
"Let the men of lore appear,
The wisest of the earth,
And expound the words of fear,
Which mar our royal mirth."

Chaldea's seers are good,
But here they have no skill:
And the unknown letters stood
Untold and awful still.
And Babel's men of age
Are wise and deep in lore;
But now they were not sage,
They saw—but knew no more.

A captive in the land,
A stranger and a youth,
He heard the king's command,
He saw that writing's truth.
The lamps around were bright,
The prophecy in view;
He read it on that night—
The morrow proved it true.

"Belshazzar's grave is made,
His kingdom pass'd away,
He, in the balance weigh'd,
Is light and worthless clay.
The shroud his robe of state,
His canopy the stone:
The Mede is at his gate!
The Persian on his throne!"

SUN OF THE SLEEPLESS.

Sun of the sleepless! melancholy star!
Whose tearful beam glows tremulously far,
That show'st the darkness thou canst not dispel,
How like art thou to joy remember'd well!
So gleams the past, the light of other days,
Which shines, but warms not with its powerless rays;
A night-beam Sorrow watcheth to behold,
Distinct, but distant—clear, but oh, how cold!

WERE MY BOSOM AS FALSE AS THOU DEEM'ST IT TO BE.

WERE my bosom as false as thou deem'st it to be,
I need not have wander'd from far Galilee:
It was but abjuring my creed to efface
The curse which, thou say'st, is the crime of my race:

If the bad never triumph, then God is with thee!
If the slave only sin, thou art spotless and free!
If the exile on earth is an outcast on high,
Live on in thy faith, but in mine I will die.

I have lost for that faith more than thou canst bestow,
As the God who permits thee to prosper doth know:
In His hand is my heart and my hope—and in thine
The land and the life which for Him I resign.

HEROD'S LAMENT FOR MARIAMNE.

OH, Mariamne! now for thee
The heart for which thou bledst is bleeding:
Revenge is lost in agony,
And wild remorse to rage succeeding.
Oh, Mariamne! where thou art
Thou canst not hear my bitter pleading;
Ah! couldst thou—thou wouldst pardon now.
Though Heaven were to my prayer unheeding.

And is she dead?—and did they dare
Obey my frenzy's jealous raving?
My wrath but doom'd my own despair:
The sword that smote her's o'er me waving
But thou art cold, my murder'd love!
And this dark heart is vainly craving
For her who soars alone above,
And leaves my soul unworthy saving.

She's gone, who shared my diadem;
She sunk, with her my joys entombing;
I swept that flower from Judah's stem,
Whose leaves for me alone were blooming;
And mine's the guilt, and mine the hell,
This bosom's desolation dooming;
And I have earn'd those tortures well,
Which unconsumed are still consuming!

ON THE DAY OF THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM BY TITUS.

FROM the last hill that looks on thy once holy dome
I beheld thee, O Sion! when render'd to Rome:
'Twas thy last sun went down, and the flames of thy fall
Flash'd back on the last glance I gave to thy wall.

I look'd for thy temple, I look'd for my home,
And forgot for a moment the bondage to come;
I beheld but the death-fire that fed on thy fane,
And the fast-fetter'd hands that made vengeance in vain.

On many an eve, the high spot whence I gazed
Had reflected the last beam of day as it blazed:
While I stood on the height, and beheld the decline
Of the rays from the mountain that shone on thy shrine.

And now on that mountain I stood on that day,
But I mark'd not the twilight beam melting away;
Oh! would that the lightning had glared in its stead,
And the thunderbolt burst on the conqueror's head!

But the gods of the Pagan shall never profane
The shrine where Jehovah disdain'd not to reign;
And scatter'd and scorn'd as Thy people may be,
Our worship, O Father! is only for Thee.

BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON WE SAT DOWN AND WEPT.

We sate down and wept by the waters
Of Babel, and thought of the day
When our foe, in the hue of his slaughters,
Made Salem's high places his prey;
And ye, oh her desolate daughters!
Were scatter'd all weeping away.

While sadly we gazed on the river
Which roll'd on in freedom below,
They demanded the song; but, oh never
That triumph the stranger shall know!
May this right hand be wither'd for ever,
Ere it string our high harp for the foe!

On the willow that harp is suspended,
O Salem! its sound should be free;
And the hour when thy glories were ended
But left me that token of thee:
And ne'er shall its soft tones be blended
With the voice of the spoiler by me!

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB.

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay wither'd and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he pass'd!
And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still!

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there roll'd not the breath of his pride:
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow and the rust on his mail;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

A SPIRIT PASS'D BEFORE ME.

FROM JOB.

A SPIRIT pass'd before me: I beheld
The face of immortality unveil'd—
Deep sleep came down on every eye save mine—
And there it stood—all formless, but divine:
Along my bones the creeping flesh did quake;
And as my damp hair stiffen'd, thus it spake:

"Is man more just than God? Is man more pure
Than He who deems even Seraphs insecure?
Creatures of clay—vain dwellers in the dust!
The moth survives you, and are ye more just?
Things of a day! you wither ere the night,
Heedless and blind to Wisdom's wasted light!"

HOURS OF IDLENESS:

A SERIES OF POEMS, ORIGINAL AND TRANSLATED.

"Virginibus puerisque canto."—HORACE, lib. iii., Ode 1.
"Μήτ' ἄρ με μάλ' αἶνεε, μήτε τι νείκει."—HOMER, *Iliad*, x. 249.
"He whistled as he went, for want of thought."—DRYDEN.

TO

THE RIGHT HONORABLE

FREDERICK, EARL OF CARLISLE,

KNIGHT OF THE GARTER, ETC., ETC.,

THIS SECOND EDITION OF THESE POEMS IS INSCRIBED,

BY HIS

OBLIGED WARD AND AFFECTIONATE KINSMAN,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

In submitting to the public eye the following collection, I have not only to combat the difficulties that writers of verse generally encounter, but may incur the charge of presumption for obtruding myself on the world, when, without doubt, I might be, at my age, more usefully employed.

These productions are the fruits of the lighter hours of a young man who has lately completed his nineteenth year. As they bear the internal evidence of a boyish mind, this is, perhaps, unnecessary information. Some few were written during the disadvantages of illness and depression of spirits: under the former influence, "CHILDISH RECOLLECTIONS," in particular, were composed. This consideration, though it cannot excite the voice of praise, may at least arrest the arm of censure. A considerable portion of these poems has been privately printed, at the request and for the perusal of my friends. I am sensible that the partial and frequently injudicious admiration of a social circle is not the criterion by which poetical genius is to be estimated, yet, "to do greatly," we must "dare greatly;" and I have hazarded my reputation and feelings in publishing this volume. "I have passed the Rubicon," and must stand or fall by the "cast of the die." In the latter event, I shall submit without a murmur; for, though not without solicitude for the fate of these effusions, my expectations are by no means sanguine. It is probable that I may have dared much and done little: for, in the words of Cowper, "it is one thing to write what may please our friends, who, because they are such, are apt to be a little biased in our favor; and another to write what may please everybody, because they who have no connection, or even knowledge of the author, will be sure to find fault if they can." To the truth of this, however, I do not wholly subscribe; on the contrary, I feel convinced that these trifles will not be treated with injustice. Their merit, if they possess any, will be liberally allowed; their numerous faults, on the other hand, cannot expect that favor which has been denied to others of maturer years, decided character, and far greater ability.

I have not aimed at exclusive originality, still less have I studied any particular model for imitation: some translations are given, of which many are paraphrastic. In the original pieces there may appear a casual coincidence with authors whose works I have been accustomed to read; but I have not been guilty of intentional plagiarism. To produce anything entirely new, in an age so fertile in rhyme, would be a herculean task, as every subject has already been treated to its utmost extent. Poetry, however, is not my primary vocation; to divert the dull moments of indisposition, or the monotony of a vacant hour, urged me "to this sin:" little can be expected from so unpromising a muse. My wreath, scanty as it must be, is all I shall derive from these productions; and I

shall never attempt to replace its fading leaves, or pluck a single additional sprig from groves where I am, at best, an intruder. Though accustomed, in my younger days, to rove a careless mountaineer on the Highlands of Scotland, I have not, of late years, had the benefit of such pure air, or so elevated a residence, as might enable me to enter the lists with genuine bards who have enjoyed both these advantages. But they derive considerable fame, and a few not less profit, from their productions: while I shall expiate my rashness as an interloper, certainly without the latter, and in all probability with a very slight share of the former. I leave to others "virum volitare per ora." I look to the few who will hear with patience "dulce est desipere in loco." To the former worthies I resign, without repining, the hope of immortality, and content myself with the not very magnificent prospect of ranking amongst "the mob of gentlemen who write"—my readers must determine whether I dare say "with ease"—or the honor of a posthumous page in "The Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors,"—a work to which the Peerage is under infinite obligations, inasmuch as many names of considerable length, sound, and antiquity, are thereby rescued from the obscurity which unluckily overshadows several voluminous productions of their illustrious bearers.

With slight hopes, and some fears, I publish this first and last attempt. To the dictates of young ambition may be ascribed many actions more criminal and equally absurd. To a few of my own age the contents may afford amusement: I trust they will, at least, be found harmless. It is highly improbable, from my situation and pursuits hereafter, that I should ever obtrude myself a second time on the public; nor, even in the very doubtful event of present indulgence, shall I be tempted to commit a future trespass of the same nature. The opinion of Dr. Johnson on the Poems of a noble relation of mine,* "That when a man of rank appeared in the character of an author, he deserved to have his merit handsomely allowed," can have little weight with verbal, and still less with periodical censors: but were it otherwise, I should be loth to avail myself of the privilege, and would rather incur the bitterest censure of anonymous criticism, than triumph in honors granted solely to a title.

* The Earl of Carlisle, whose works have long received the meed of public applause, to which, by their intrinsic worth, they were well entitled.

HOURS OF IDLENESS.

ON THE DEATH OF A YOUNG LADY,

COUSIN TO THE AUTHOR, AND VERY DEAR TO HIM.*

HUSH'D are the winds, and still the evening gloom,
Not e'en a zephyr wanders through the grove,
Whilst I return, to view my Margaret's tomb,
And scatter flowers on the dust I love.

Within this narrow cell reclines her clay,
That clay, where once such animation beam'd,
The King of Terrors seized her as his prey;
Not worth, nor beauty, have her life redeem'd.

Oh! could that King of Terrors pity feel,
Or Heaven reverse the dread decrees of fate!
Not here the mourner would his grief reveal,
Not here the muse her virtues would relate.

But wherefore weep? Her matchless spirit soars
Beyond where splendid shines the orb of day;
And weeping angels lead her to those bowers
Where endless pleasures virtue's deeds repay.

And shall presumptuous mortals Heaven arraign,
And, madly, godlike Providence accuse?
Ah! no, far fly from me attempts so vain;—
I'll ne'er submission to my God refuse.

Yet is remembrance of those virtues dear,
Yet fresh the memory of that beauteous face;
Still they call forth my warm affection's tear,
Still in my heart retain their wonted place.

1802.

TO E——

LET Folly smile, to view the names
Of thee and me in friendship twined;
Yet Virtue will have greater claims
To love, than rank with vice combined.

* The author claims the indulgence of the reader more for this piece than, perhaps, any other in the collection; but as it was written at an earlier period than the rest (being composed at the age of fourteen), and his first essay, he preferred submitting it to the indulgence of his friends in its present state, to making either addition or alteration.

And though unequal is thy fate,
Since title deck'd my higher birth,
Yet envy not this gaudy state;
Thine is the pride of modest worth.

Our souls at least congenial meet,
Nor can thy lot my rank disgrace;
Our intercourse is not less sweet,
Since worth of rank supplies the place.

November, 1802.

TO D——.

In thee, I fondly hoped to clasp
A friend, whom death alone could sever;
Till envy, with malignant grasp,
Detach'd thee from my breast for ever.

True, she has forced thee from my breast,
Yet, in my heart thou keep'st thy seat;
There, there thine image still must rest,
Until that heart shall cease to beat.

And, when the grave restores her dead,
When life again to dust is given,
On thy dear breast I'll lay my head—
Without thee, where would be my heaven?

February, 1803.

EPITAPH ON A FRIEND.

Αστὴρ πρὶν μὲν ἔλαμπες ἐνὶ ζωοῖσιν ἑῷος.—LAERTIUS.

O FRIEND! for ever loved, for ever dear!
What fruitless tears have bathed thy honor'd bier!
What sighs re-echo'd to thy parting breath,
Whilst thou wast struggling in the pangs of death!
Could tears retard the tyrant in his course;
Could sighs avert his dart's relentless force;
Could youth and virtue claim a short delay,
Or beauty charm the spectre from his prey;
Thou still hadst lived to bless my aching sight,
Thy comrade's honor and thy friend's delight.
If yet thy gentle spirit hover nigh
The spot where now thy mouldering ashes lie,
Here wilt thou read, recorded on my heart,
A grief too deep to trust the sculptor's art.
No marble marks thy couch of lowly sleep,
But living statues there are seen to weep;
Affliction's semblance bends not o'er thy tomb,
Affliction's self deplores thy youthful doom.
What though thy sire lament his failing line,
A father's sorrows cannot equal mine!
Though none, like thee, his dying hour will cheer,
Yet other offspring soothe his anguish here:

But, who with me shall hold thy former place?
Thine image, what new friendship can efface?
Ah! none!—a father's tears will cease to flow,
Time will assuage an infant brother's woe;
To all, save one, is consolation known,
While solitary friendship sighs alone.

1803.

A FRAGMENT.

When, to their airy hall, my fathers' voice
Shall call my spirit, joyful in their choice;
When, poised upon the gale, my form shall ride,
Or, dark in mist, descend the mountain's side;
Oh! may my shade behold no sculptured urns
To mark the spot where earth to earth returns!
No lengthen'd scroll, no praise-encumber'd stone;
My epitaph shall be my name alone;
If *that* with honor fail to crown my clay,
Oh! may no other fame my deeds repay!
That, only *that*, shall single out the spot;
By that remember'd, or with that forgot.

1803.

ON LEAVING NEWSTEAD ABBEY.

"Why dost thou build the hall, son of the winged days? Thou lookest from thy tower to-day: yet a few years, and the blast of the desert comes, it howls in thy empty court."—Ossian.

Through thy battlements, Newstead, the hollow winds whistle;
Thou, the hall of my fathers, art gone to decay:
In thy once smiling garden, the hemlock and thistle
Have choked up the rose which late bloom'd in the way.

Of the mail-cover'd Barons, who proudly to battle
Led their vassals from Europe to Palestine's plain,
The escutcheon and shield, which with every blast rattle,
Are the only sad vestiges now that remain.

No more doth old Robert, with harp-stringing numbers,
Raise a flame in the breast for the war-laurell'd wreath;
Near Askalon's towers, John of Horistan slumbers;
Unnerved is the hand of his minstrel by death.

Paul and Hubert, too, sleep in the valley of Cressy;
For the safety of Edward and England they fell:
My fathers! the tears of your country redress ye;
How you fought, how you died, still her annals can tell.

On Marston, with Rupert, 'gainst traitors contending,*
Four brothers enrich'd with their blood the bleak field;
For the rights of a monarch their country defending,
Till death their attachment to royalty seal'd.

* The battle of Marston Moor, where the adherents of Charles I. were defeated.—Rupert, son of the Elector Palatine, and nephew to Charles I. He afterwards commanded the fleet in the reign of Charles II.

Shades of heroes, farewell! your descendant, departing
From the seat of his ancestors, bids you adieu!
Abroad, or at home, your remembrance imparting
New courage, he'll think upon glory and you.

Though a tear dim his eye at this sad separation,
'Tis nature, not fear, that excites his regret;
Far distant he goes, with the same emulation,
The fame of his fathers he ne'er can forget.

That fame, and that memory, still will he cherish;
He vows that he ne'er will disgrace your renown:
Like you will he live, or like you will he perish:
When decay'd, may he mingle his dust with your own!

1803.

LINES

WRITTEN IN "LETTERS TO AN ITALIAN NUN AND AN ENGLISH GENTLEMAN: BY J. J. ROUSSEAU: FOUNDED ON FACTS."

"Away, away, your flattering arts
May now betray some simple hearts;
And you will smile at their believing,
And they shall weep at your deceiving."

ANSWER TO THE FOREGOING, ADDRESSED TO MISS ——.

Dear, simple girl, those flattering arts,
From which thou'dst guard frail female hearts,
Exist but in imagination—
Mere phantoms of thine own creation;
For he who views that witching grace,
That perfect form, that lovely face,
With eyes admiring, oh! believe me,
He never wishes to deceive thee:
Once in thy polish'd mirror glance,
Thou'lt there descry that elegance
Which from our sex demands such praises,
But envy in the other raises:
Then he who tells thee of thy beauty,
Believe me, only does his duty:
Ah! fly not from the candid youth;
It is not flattery—'tis truth.

July, 1804.

ADRIAN'S ADDRESS TO HIS SOUL WHEN DYING.*

Ah! gentle, fleeting, wav'ring sprite,
Friend and associate of this clay!
To what unknown region borne,
Wilt thou now wing thy distant flight?
No more with wonted humor gay,
But pallid, cheerless, and forlorn.

* "Animula! vagula, blandula,
Hospes comesque corporis,
Quæ nunc abibis in loca—
Pallidula, rigida, nudula,
Nec, ut soles, dabis jocos?"

TRANSLATION FROM CATULLUS.

AD LESBIAM.

EQUAL to Jove that youth must be—
Greater than Jove he seems to me—
Who, free from Jealousy's alarms,
Securely views thy matchless charms.
That cheek, which ever dimpling glows,
That mouth, from whence such music flows,
To him, alike, are always known,
Reserved for him, and him alone.
Ah, Lesbia! though 'tis death to me,
I cannot choose but look on thee;
But, at the sight, my senses fly;
I needs must gaze, but, gazing, die;
Whilst trembling with a thousand fears,
Parch'd to the throat my tongue adheres,
My pulse beats quick, my breath heaves short,
My limbs deny their slight support,
Cold dews my pallid face o'erspread,
With deadly languor droops my head,
My ears with tingling echoes ring,
And life itself is on the wing;
My eyes refuse the cheering light,
Their orbs are veil'd in starless night:
Such pangs my nature sinks beneath,
And feels a temporary death.

TRANSLATION OF THE EPITAPH ON VIRGIL AND TIBULLUS,

BY DOMITIUS MARSUS.

HE who sublime in epic numbers roll'd,
And he who struck the softer lyre of love,
By Death's unequal hand alike controll'd,*
Fit comrades in Elysian regions move!

IMITATION OF TIBULLUS.

"Sulpicia ad Cerinthum."—*Lib.* 4.

CRUEL Cerinthus! does the fell disease
Which racks my breast your fickle bosom please?
Alas! I wish'd but to o'ercome the pain,
That I might live for love and you again:
But now I scarcely shall bewail my fate;
By death alone I can avoid your hate.

* The hand of Death is said to be unjust or unequal, as Virgil was considerably older than Tibullus at his decease.

TRANSLATION FROM CATULLUS.

Ye Cupids, droop each little head,
Nor let your wings with joy be spread,
My Lesbia's favorite bird is dead,
Whom dearer than her eyes she loved:
For he was gentle, and so true,
Obedient to her call he flew,
No fear, no wild alarm he knew,
But lightly o'er her bosom moved:

And softly fluttering here and there,
He never sought to cleave the air,
But chirrup'd oft, and, free from care,
Tuned to her ear his grateful strain.
Now having pass'd the gloomy bourne
From whence he never can return,
His death and Lesbia's grief I mourn,
Who sighs, alas! but sighs in vain.

Oh! curst be thou, devouring grave!
Whose jaws eternal victims crave,
From whom no earthly power can save,
For thou hast ta'en the bird away:
From thee my Lesbia's eyes o'erflow,
Her swollen cheeks with weeping glow;
Thou art the cause of all her woe,
Receptacle of life's decay.

IMITATED FROM CATULLUS.

TO ELLEN.

Oh! might I kiss those eyes of fire,
A million scarce would quench desire:
Still would I steep my lips in bliss,
And dwell an age on every kiss:
Nor then my soul should sated be,
Still would I kiss and cling to thee:
Nought should my kiss from thine dissever;
Still would we kiss, and kiss for ever;
E'en though the numbers did exceed
The yellow harvest's countless seed.
To part would be a vain endeavor:
Could I desist?—ah! never—never!

TRANSLATION FROM HORACE.

The man of firm and noble soul
No factious clamors can control;
No threat'ning tyrant's darkling brow
Can swerve him from his just intent:
Gales the warring waves which plough,
By Auster on the billows spent,
To curb the Adriatic main,
Would awe his fix'd, determined mind in vain.

Ay, and the red right arm of Jove,
Hurtling his lightnings from above,
With all his terrors there unfurl'd,
He would, unmoved, unawed, behold.
The flames of an expiring world,
Again in crushing chaos roll'd,
In vast promiscuous ruin hurl'd,
Might light his glorious funeral pile:
Still dauntless 'midst the wreck of earth he'd smile.

FROM ANACREON.

I WISH to tune my quivering lyre
To deeds of fame and notes of fire;
To echo, from its rising swell,
How heroes fought and nations fell,
When Atreus' sons advanced to war,
Or Tyrian Cadmus roved afar;
But still, to martial strains unknown,
My lyre recurs to love alone:
Fired with the hope of future fame,
I seek some nobler hero's name:
The dying chords are strung anew,
To war, to war, my harp is due:
With glowing strings, the epic strain
To Jove's great son I raise again;
Alcides and his glorious deeds,
Beneath whose arm the Hydra bleeds,
All, all in vain; my wayward lyre
Wakes silver notes of soft desire.
Adieu ye chiefs renown'd in arms!
Adieu the clang of war's alarms!
To other deeds my soul is strung,
And sweeter notes shall now be sung;
My harp shall all its powers reveal,
To tell the tale my heart must feel:
Love, Love alone, my lyre shall claim,
In songs of bliss and sighs of flame.

FROM ANACREON.

'TWAS now the hour when Night had driven
Her car half round yon sable heaven;
Boötes, only, seem'd to roll
His arctic charge around the pole:
While mortals lost in gentle sleep,
Forgot to smile, or ceased to weep:
At this lone hour, the Paphian boy,
Descending from the realms of joy,
Quick to my gate directs his course,
And knocks with all his little force.
My visions fled, alarm'd I rose—
"What stranger breaks my blest repose?"
"Alas!" replies the wily child,
In faltering accents sweetly mild,

"A hapless infant here I roam,
Far from my dear maternal home.
Oh! shield me from the wintry blast!
The nightly storm is pouring fast;
No prowling robber lingers here;
A wandering baby who can fear?"
I heard his seeming artless tale,
I heard his sighs upon the gale:
My breast was never pity's foe,
But felt for all the baby's woe.
I drew the bar, and by the light,
Young Love, the infant, met my sight;
His bow across his shoulders flung,
And thence his fatal quiver hung
(Ah! little did I think the dart
Would rankle soon within my heart).
With care I tend my weary guest,
His little fingers chill my breast;
His glossy curls, his azure wing,
Which droop with nightly showers, I wring;
His shivering limbs the embers warm;
And now reviving from the storm,
Scarce had he felt his wonted glow,
Than swift he seized his slender bow:—
"I fain would know, my gentle host,"
He cried, "if this its strength has lost;
I fear, relax'd with midnight dews,
The strings their former aid refuse."
With poison tipt, his arrow flies,
Deep in my tortured heart it lies;
Then loud the joyous urchin laugh'd:—
"My bow can still impel the shaft:
'Tis firmly fix'd, thy sighs reveal it;
Say, courteous host, canst thou not feel it?"

FROM THE PROMETHEUS VINCTUS OF ÆSCHYLUS

GREAT Jove, to whose almighty throne
Both gods and mortals homage pay,
Ne'er may my soul thy powers disown,
Thy dread behests ne'er disobey.
Oft shall the sacred victim fall
In sea-girt Ocean's mossy hall;
My voice shall raise no impious strain
'Gainst him who rules the sky and azure main.

How different now thy joyless fate,
Since first Hesione thy bride,
When placed aloft in godlike state,
The blushing beauty by thy side,
Thou sat'st, while reverend Ocean smiled,
And mirthful strains the hours beguiled,
The Nymphs and Tritons danced around,
Nor yet thy doom was fix'd, nor Jove relentless frown'd.

HARROW, *Dec.* 1, 1804.

TO EMMA.

SINCE now the hour is come at last,
When you must quit your anxious lover;
Since now our dream of bliss is past,
One pang, my girl, and all is over.

Alas! that pang will be severe,
Which bids us part to meet no more;
Which tears me far from one so dear,
Departing for a distant shore.

Well! we have pass'd some happy hours,
And joy will mingle with our tears,
When thinking on these ancient towers,
The shelter of our infant years;

Where, from this Gothic casement's height,
We view'd the lake, the park, the dell;
And still, though tears obstruct our sight,
We lingering look a last farewell,

O'er fields through which we used to run,
And spend the hours in childish play;
O'er shades where, when our race was done,
Reposing on my breast you lay;

Whilst I, admiring, too remiss,
Forgot to scare the hovering flies,
Yet envied every fly the kiss
It dared to give your slumbering eyes:

See still the little painted bark,
In which I row'd you o'er the lake;
See there, high waving o'er the park,
The elm I clamber'd for your sake.

These times are past—our joys are gone,
You leave me, leave this happy vale;
These scenes I must retrace alone:
Without thee, what will they avail?

Who can conceive, who has not proved,
The anguish of a last embrace,
When, torn from all you fondly loved,
You bid a long adieu to peace?

This is the deepest of our woes,
For this these tears our cheeks bedew;
This is of love the final close,
O God! the fondest, last adieu!

TO M. S. G.

WHENE'ER I view those lips of thine,
Their hue invites my fervent kiss;
Yet I forego that bliss divine,
Alas! it were unhallow'd bliss.

Whene'er I dream of that pure breast,
How could I dwell upon its snows!
Yet is the daring wish represt;
For that—would banish its repose.

A glance from thy soul-searching eye
Can raise with hope, depress with fear;
Yet I conceal my love—and why?
I would not force a painful tear.

I ne'er have told my love, yet thou
Hast seen my ardent flame too well;
And shall I plead my passion now,
To make thy bosom's heaven a hell?

No! for thou never canst be mine,
United by the priest's decree:
By any ties but those divine,
Mine, my beloved, thou ne'er shalt be.

Then let the secret fire consume,
Let it consume, thou shalt not know:
With joy I court a certain doom,
Rather than spread its guilty glow.

I will not ease my tortured heart,
By driving dove-eyed peace from thine;
Rather than such a sting impart,
Each thought presumptuous I resign.

Yes! yield those lips, for which I'd brave
More than I here shall dare to tell;
Thy innocence and mine to save—
I bid thee now a last farewell.

Yes! yield that breast, to seek despair,
And hope no more a fond embrace;
Which to obtain my soul would dare
All, all reproach—but thy disgrace.

At least from guilt thou shalt be free,
No matron shall thy shame reprove;
Though cureless pangs may prey on me,
No martyr shalt thou be to love.

TO CAROLINE.

THINK'ST thou I saw thy beauteous eyes,
Suffused in tears, implore to stay,
And heard unmoved thy plenteous sighs,
Which said far more than words can say?

Though keen the grief thy tears exprest,
When love and hope lay both o'erthrown;
Yet still, my girl, this bleeding breast
Throbb'd with deep sorrow as thine own.

But when our cheeks with anguish glow'd,
When thy sweet lips were join'd to mine,
The tears that from my eyelids flow'd
Were lost in those which fell from thine.

Thou couldst not feel my burning cheek,
Thy gushing tears had quench'd its flame;
And as thy tongue essay'd to speak,
In sighs alone it breathed my name.

And yet, my girl, we weep in vain,
In vain our fate in sighs deplore;
Remembrance only can remain—
But that will make us weep the more.

Again, thou best beloved, adieu!
Ah! if thou canst, o'ercome regret;
Nor let thy mind past joys review—
Our only hope is to forget!

TO CAROLINE.

When I hear you express an affection so warm,
Ne'er think, my beloved, that I do not believe;
For your lip would the soul of suspicion disarm,
And your eye beams a ray which can never deceive.

Yet, still, this fond bosom regrets, while adoring,
That love, like the leaf, must fall into the sear;
That age will come on, when remembrance, deploring,
Contemplates the scenes of her youth with a tear;

That the time must arrive, when, no longer retaining
Their auburn, those locks must wave thin to the breeze,
When a few silver hairs of those tresses remaining,
Prove nature a prey to decay and disease.

'Tis this, my beloved, which spreads gloom o'er my features,
Though I ne'er shall presume to arraign the decree,
Which God has proclaim'd as the fate of His creatures,
In the death which one day will deprive you of me.

Mistake not, sweet sceptic, the cause of emotion,
No doubt can the mind of your lover invade;
He worships each look with such faithful devotion,
A smile can enchant, or a tear can dissuade.

But as death, my beloved, soon or late shall o'ertake us,
And our breasts, which alive with such sympathy glow,
Will sleep in the grave till the blast shall awake us,
When calling the dead, in earth's bosom laid low,—

Oh! then let us drain, while we may, draughts of pleasure,
Which from passion like ours may unceasingly flow:
Let us pass round the cup of love's bliss in full measure,
And quaff the contents as our nectar below.

1805.

TO CAROLINE.

Oh! when shall the grave hide for ever my sorrows?
Oh! when shall my soul wing her flight from this clay?
The present is hell, and the coming to-morrow
But brings, with new torture, the curse of to-day.

From my eye flows no tear, from my lips flow no curses,
I blast not the fiends who have hurl'd me from bliss,
For poor is the soul which bewailing rehearses
Its querulous grief, when in anguish like this.

Was my eye, 'stead of tears, with red fury flakes bright'ning,
Would my lips breathe a flame which no stream could assuage,
On our foes should my glance launch in vengeance its lightning,
With transport my tongue give a loose to its rage.

But now tears and curses, alike unavailing,
Would add to the souls of our tyrants delight:
Could they view us our sad separation bewailing,
Their merciless hearts would rejoice at the sight.

Yet still, though we bend with a feign'd resignation,
Life beams not for us with one ray that can cheer,
Love and hope upon earth bring no more consolation;
In the grave is our hope, for in life is our fear.

Oh! when, my adored, in the tomb will they place me,
Since in life, love and friendship for ever are fled?
If again in the mansion of death I embrace thee,
Perhaps they will leave unmolested the dead.

1805.

STANZAS TO A LADY,

WITH THE POEMS OF CAMOENS.

This votive pledge of fond esteem,
Perhaps, dear girl! for me thou'lt prize;
It sings of Love's enchanting dream,
A theme we never can despise.

Who blames it but the envious fool,
The old and disappointed maid;
Or pupil of the prudish school,
In single sorrow doom'd to fade?

Then read, dear girl! with feeling read,
For thou wilt ne'er be one of those;
To thee in vain I shall not plead
In pity for the poet's woes.

He was in sooth a genuine bard:
His was no vain, fictitious flame:
Like his, may love be thy reward,
But not thy hapless fate the same.

THE FIRST KISS OF LOVE.

Ἀ Βαρβιτος δε χορδαῖς
Ἐρωτα μουνον ἠχεῖ.—ANACREON.

AWAY with your fictions of flimsy romance;
Those tissues of falsehood which folly has wove!
Give me the mild beam of the soul-breathing glance,
Or the rapture which dwells on the first kiss of love.

Ye rhymers, whose bosoms with fantasy glow,
Whose pastoral passions are made for the grove;
From what blest inspirations your sonnets would flow,
Could you ever have tasted the first kiss of love!

If Apollo should e'er his assistance refuse,
Or the Nine be disposed from your service to rove,
Invoke them no more, bid adieu to the muse,
And try the effect of the first kiss of love!

I hate you, ye cold compositions of art!
Though prudes may condemn me, and bigots reprove,
I court the effusions that spring from the heart,
Which throbs with delight to the first kiss of love.

Your shepherds, your flocks, those fantastical themes,
Perhaps may amuse, yet they never can move:
Arcadia displays but a region of dreams:
What are visions like these to the first kiss of love?

Oh! cease to affirm that man, since his birth,
From Adam till now, has with wretchedness strove,
Some portion of paradise still is on earth,
And Eden revives in the first kiss of love.

When age chills the blood, when our pleasures are past—
For years fleet away with the wings of the dove—
The dearest remembrance will still be the last,
Our sweetest memorial the first kiss of love.

ON A CHANGE OF MASTERS AT A GREAT PUBLIC SCHOOL.

WHERE are those honors, Ida! once your own,
When Probus fill'd your magisterial throne?
As ancient Rome, fast falling to disgrace,
Hail'd a barbarian in her Cæsar's place,
So you, degenerate, share as hard a fate,
And seat Pomposus where your Probus sate.
Of narrow brain, yet of a narrower soul,
Pomposus holds you in his harsh control;
Pomposus, by no social virtue sway'd,
With florid jargon, and with vain parade;
With noisy nonsense, and new-fangled rules,
Such as were ne'er before enforced in schools;
Mistaking pedantry for learning's laws,
He governs, sanction'd but by self-applause;

With him the same dire fate attending Rome,
Ill-fated Ida! soon must stamp your doom:
Like her o'erthrown, for ever lost to fame,
No trace of science left you, but the name.

July, 1805.

TO THE DUKE OF DORSET.*

DORSET! whose early steps with mine have stray'd,
Exploring every path of Ida's glade;
Whom still affection taught me to defend,
And made me less a tyrant than a friend,
Though the harsh custom of our youthful ban
Bade *thee* obey, and gave *me* to command; †
Thee, on whose head a few short years will shower
The gift of riches, and the pride of power;
E'en now a name illustrious is thine own,
Renown'd in rank, not far beneath the throne.
Yet, Dorset, let not this seduce thy soul
To shun fair science, or evade control,
Though passive tutors, fearful to dispraise ‡
The titled child, whose future breath may raise,
View ducal errors with indulgent eyes,
And wink at faults they tremble to chastise.
When youthful parasites, who bend the knee
To wealth, their golden idol, not to thee—
And even in simple boyhood's opening dawn
Some slaves are found to flatter and to fawn—
When these declare, "that pomp alone should wait
On one by birth predestined to be great;
That books were only meant for drudging fools,
That gallant spirits scorn the common rules;"
Believe them not;—they point the path to shame,
And seek to blast the honors of thy name.
Turn to the few in Ida's early throng,
Whose souls disdain not to condemn the wrong;
Or if, amidst the comrades of thy youth,
None dare to raise the sterner voice of truth,
Ask thine own heart; 'twill bid thee, boy, forbear;
For *well* I know that virtue lingers there.
Yes! I have mark'd thee many a passing day,
But now new scenes invite me far away;
Yes! I have mark'd within that generous mind
A soul, if well matured, to bless mankind.

* In looking over my papers to select a few additional poems for this second edition, I found the above lines, which I had totally forgotten, composed in the summer of 1805, a short time previous to my departure from Harrow. They were addressed to a young schoolfellow of high rank, who had been my frequent companion in some rambles through the neighboring country: however, he never saw the lines, and most probably never will. As, on a re-perusal, I found them not worse than some other pieces in the collection, I have now published them for the first time, after a slight revision.

† At every public school the junior boys are completely subservient to the upper forms till they attain a seat in the higher classes. From this state of probation, very properly, no rank is exempt, but after a certain period they command in turn those who succeed.

‡ Allow me to disclaim any personal allusions, even the most distant: I merely mention generally what is too often the weakness of preceptors.

Ah! though myself, by nature haughty, wild,
Whom Indiscretion hail'd her favorite child:
Though every error stamps me for her own,
And dooms my fall, I fain would fall alone;
Though my proud heart no precept now can tame,
I love the virtues which I cannot claim.
'Tis not enough, with other sons of power,
To gleam the lambent meteor of an hour;
To swell some peerage page in feeble pride,
With long-drawn names that grace no page beside;
Then share with titled crowds the common lot—
In life just gazed at, in the grave forgot:
While nought divides thee from the vulgar dead,
Except the dull cold stone that hides thy head,
The mouldering 'scutcheon, or the herald's roll,
That well-emblazon'd but neglected scroll,
Where lords, unhonor'd, in the tomb may find
One spot, to leave a worthless name behind.
There sleep, unnoticed as the gloomy vaults
That veil their dust, their follies, and their faults,
A race, with old armorial lists o'erspread,
In records destined never to be read.
Fain would I view thee, with prophetic eyes,
Exalted more among the good and wise,
A glorious and a long career pursue,
As first in rank, the first in talent too:
Spurn every vice, each little meanness shun;
Not Fortune's minion, but her noblest son.
Turn to the annals of a former day;
Bright are the deeds thine earlier sires display.
One, though a courtier, lived a man of worth,
And call'd, proud boast! the British drama forth.
Another view, not less renown'd for wit;
Alike for courts, and camps, or senates fit;
Bold in the field, and favor'd by the Nine;
In every splendid part ordain'd to shine;
Far, far distinguish'd from the glittering throng,
The pride of princes, and the boast of song.
Such were thy fathers; thus preserve their name;
Not heir to titles only, but to fame.
The hour draws nigh, a few brief days will close,
To me, this little scene of joys and woes;
Each knell of Time now warns me to resign
Shades where Hope, Peace, and Friendship all were mine:
Hope, that could vary like the rainbow's hue,
And gild their pinions as the moments flew;
Peace, that reflection never frown'd away,
By dreams of ill to cloud some future day;
Friendship, whose truth let childhood only tell;
Alas! they love not long, who love so well.
To these adieu! nor let me linger o'er
Scenes hail'd, as exiles hail their native shore,
Receding slowly through the dark-blue deep,
Beheld by eyes that mourn, yet cannot weep.
Dorset, farewell! I will not ask one part
Of sad remembrance in so young a heart;

The coming morrow from thy youthful mind
Will sweep my name, nor leave a trace behind.
And yet, perhaps, in some maturer year,
Since chance has thrown us in the selfsame sphere,
Since the same senate, nay, the same debate,
May one day claim our suffrage for the state,
We hence may meet, and pass each other by,
With faint regard, or cold and distant eye.
For me, in future, neither friend nor foe,
A stranger to thyself, thy weal or woe,
With thee no more again I hope to trace
The recollection of our early race;
No more, as once, in social hours rejoice,
Or hear, unless in crowds, thy well-known voice:
Still, if the wishes of a heart untaught
To veil those feelings which perchance it ought,
If these—but let me cease the lengthen'd strain—
Oh! if these wishes are not breathed in vain,
The guardian seraph who directs thy fate
Will leave thee glorious, as he found thee great.

1805.

FRAGMENT,

WRITTEN SHORTLY AFTER THE MARRIAGE OF MISS CHAWORTH.

Hills of Annesley! bleak and barren,
Where my thoughtless childhood stray'd,
How the northern tempests, warring,
Howl above thy tufted shade!

Now no more, the hours beguiling,
Former favorite haunts I see;
Now no more my Mary smiling
Makes ye seem a heaven to me.

1805.

GRANTA: A MEDLEY.

Αργυρέαις λόγχαισι μάχου καὶ πάντα Κρατήσαις.

Oh! could Le Sage's demon gift *
Be realized at my desire,
This night my trembling form he'd lift
To place it on St. Mary's spire.

Then would, unroof'd, old Granta's halls
Pedantic inmates full display;
Fellows who dream on lawn or stalls,
The price of venal votes to pay.

Then would I view each rival wight,
Petty and Palmerston survey;
Who canvass there with all their might
Against the next elective day.

* The Diable Boiteux of Le Sage, where Asmodeus, the demon, places Don Cleofas on an elevated situation, and unroofs the houses for inspection.

Lo! candidates and voters lie
All lull'd in sleep, a goodly number:
A race renown'd for piety,
Whose conscience won't disturb their slumber.

Lord H——, indeed, may not demur;
Fellows are sage reflecting men:
They know preferment can occur
But very seldom—now and then.

They know the Chancellor has got
Some pretty livings in disposal:
Each hopes that one may be his lot,
And therefore smiles on his proposal.

Now from the soporific scene
I'll turn mine eye, as night grows later,
To view, unheeded and unseen,
The studious sons of Alma Mater.

There, in apartments small and damp,
The candidate for college prizes
Sits poring by the midnight lamp;
Goes late to bed, yet early rises.

He surely well deserves to gain them,
With all the honors of his college,
Who, striving hardly to obtain them,
Thus seeks unprofitable knowledge;

Who sacrifices hours of rest
To scan precisely metres Attic;
Or agitates his anxious breast
In solving problems mathematic:

Who reads false quantities in Scale,*
Or puzzles o'er the deep triangle;
Deprived of many a wholesome meal;
In barbarous Latin doom'd to wrangle:†

Renouncing every pleasing page
From authors of historic use;
Preferring to the letter'd sage
The square of the hypothenuse.‡

Still, harmless are these occupations,
That hurt none but the hapless student,
Compared with other recreations,
Which bring together the imprudent;

Whose daring revels shock the sight,
When vice and infamy combine,
When drunkenness and dice invite,
As every sense is steep'd in wine.

* Scale's publication on Greek Metres displays considerable talent and ingenuity, but, as might be expected in so difficult a work, is not remarkable for accuracy.

† The Latin of the schools is of the *canine species*, and not very intelligible.

‡ The discovery of Pythagoras, that the square of the hypothenuse is equal to the squares of the other two sides of a right-angled triangle.

Not so the methodistic crew,
Who plans of reformation lay:
In humble attitude they sue,
And for the sins of others pray:

Forgetting that their pride of spirit,
Their exultation in their trial,
Detracts most largely from the merit
Of all their boasted self-denial.

'Tis morn:—from these I turn my sight.
What scene is this which meets the eye?
A numerous crowd, array'd in white,
Across the green in numbers fly.

Loud rings in air the chapel bell;
'Tis hush'd:—what sounds are these I hear?
The organ's soft celestial swell
Rolls deeply on the list'ning ear.

To this is join'd the sacred song,
The royal minstrel's hallow'd strain;
Though he who hears the music long
Will never wish to hear again.

Our choir would scarcely be excused,
Even as a band of raw beginners;
All mercy now must be refused
To such a set of croaking sinners.

If David when his toils were ended,
Had heard these blockheads sing before him,
To us his psalms had ne'er descended—
In furious mood he would have tore 'em.

The luckless Israelites, when taken
By some inhuman tyrant's order,
Were asked to sing, by joy forsaken,
On Babylonian river's border.

Oh! had they sung in notes like these,
Inspired by stratagem or fear,
They might have set their hearts at ease,
The devil a soul had stay'd to hear.

But if I scribble longer now,
The deuce a soul will stay to read:
My pen is blunt, my ink is low;
'Tis almost time to stop, indeed.

Therefore, farewell, old Granta's spires:
No more, like Cleofus, I fly:
No more thy theme my muse inspires:
The reader 's tired, and so am I.

1806.

ON A DISTANT VIEW OF THE VILLAGE AND SCHOOL OF HARROW-ON-THE-HILL.

"Oh! mihi præteritos referat si Jupiter annos."—VIRGIL.

Ye scenes of my childhood, whose loved recollection
Embitters the present, compared with the past;
Where science first dawn'd on the powers of reflection,
And friendships were form'd, too romantic to last;

Where fancy yet joys to trace the resemblance
Of comrades, in friendship and mischief allied,
How welcome to me your ne'er-fading resemblance,
Which rests in the bosom, though hope is denied!

Again I revisit the hills where we sported,
The streams where we swam, and the fields where we fought;
The school where, loud warn'd by the bell, we resorted,
To pore o'er the precepts by pedagogues taught.

Again I behold where for hours I have ponder'd,
As reclining, at eve, on yon tombstone I lay;
Or round the steep brow of the churchyard I wander'd,
To catch the last gleam of the sun's setting ray.

I once more view the room, with spectators surrounded,
Where, as Zanga, I trod on Alonzo o'erthrown;
While, to swell my young pride, such applauses resounded,
I fancied that Mossop himself was outshone.*

Or, as Lear, I pour'd forth the deep imprecation,
By my daughters of kingdom and reason deprived;
Till, fired by loud plaudits and self-adulation,
I regarded myself as a Garrick revived.

Ye dreams of my boyhood, how much I regret you!
Unfaded your memory dwells in my breast;
Though sad and deserted, I ne'er can forget you:
Your pleasures may still be in fancy possest.

To Ida full oft may remembrance restore me,
While fate shall the shades of the future unroll!
Since darkness o'ershadows the prospect before me,
More dear is the beam of the past to my soul.

But if, through the course of the years which await me,
Some new scene of pleasure should open to view,
I will say, while with rapture the thought shall elate me,
"Oh! such were the days which my infancy knew!"

1806.

TO M——.

Oh! did those eyes, instead of fire,
With bright but mild affection shine,
Though they might kindle less desire,
Love, more than mortal, would be thine.

* Mossop, a contemporary of Garrick, famous for his performance of Zanga.

For thou art form'd so heavenly fair,
  Howe'er those orbs may wildly beam,
We must admire, but still despair;
  That fatal glance forbids esteem.

When Nature stamp'd thy beauteous birth,
  So much perfection in thee shone,
She fear'd that, too divine for earth,
  The skies might claim thee for their own:

Therefore, to guard her dearest work,
  Lest angels might dispute the prize,
She bade a secret lightning lurk
  Within those once celestial eyes.

These might the boldest sylph appall,
  When gleaming with meridian blaze:
Thy beauty must enrapture all;
  But who can dare thine ardent gaze?

'Tis said that Berenice's hair
  In stars adorns the vault of heaven;
But they would ne'er permit thee there,
  Thou wouldst so far outshine the seven.

For did those eyes as planets roll,
  Thy sister-lights would scarce appear:
E'en suns, which systems now control,
  Would twinkle dimly through their sphere.*

1806.

TO WOMAN.

Woman! experience might have told me,
That all must love thee who behold thee;
Surely experience might have taught
Thy firmest promises are nought:
But, placed in all thy charms before me,
All-I forget, but to adore thee.
O Memory! thou choicest blessing
When join'd with hope, when still possessing;
But how much cursed by every lover
When hope is fled, and passion's over.
Woman, that fair and fond deceiver,
How fond are striplings to believe her!
How throbs the pulse when first we view
The eye that rolls in glossy blue,
Or sparkles black, or mildly throws
A beam from under hazel brows!
How quick we credit every oath,
And hear her plight the willing troth!
Fondly we hope 'twill last for aye,
When lo! she changes in a day.
This record will for ever stand,
"Woman! thy vows are traced in sand."†

* "Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,
Having some business, do entreat her eyes,
To twinkle in their spheres till they return."—Shakspeare.

† This line is almost a literal translation from a Spanish proverb.

TO M. S. G.

When I dream that you love me, you'll surely forgive—
Extend not your anger to sleep;
For in visions alone your affection can live—
I rise, and it leaves me to weep.

Then, Morpheus! envelop my faculties fast,
Shed o'er me your languor benign;
Should the dream of to-night but resemble the last,
What rapture celestial is mine!

They tell us that slumber, the sister of death,
Mortality's emblem is given:
To fate how I long to resign my frail breath,
If this be a foretaste of heaven!

Ah! frown not, sweet lady, unbend your soft brow,
Nor deem me too happy in this;
If I sin in my dream, I atone for it now,
Thus doom'd but to gaze upon bliss.

Though in visions, sweet lady, perhaps you may smile,
Oh! think not my penance deficient!
When dreams of your presence my slumbers beguile,
To awake will be torture sufficient.

TO MARY,

ON RECEIVING HER PICTURE.

This faint resemblance of thy charms,
Though strong as mortal art could give,
My constant heart of fear disarms,
Revives my hopes, and bids me live.

Here I can trace the locks of gold
Which round thy snowy forehead wave,
The cheek which sprung from beauty's mould,
The lips which made me beauty's slave.

Here I can trace—ah, no! that eye,
Whose azure floats in liquid fire,
Must all the painter's art defy,
And bid him from the task retire.

Here I behold its beauteous hue;
But where's the beam so sweetly straying,
Which gave a lustre to its blue,
Like Luna o'er the ocean playing?

Sweet copy! far more dear to me,
Lifeless, unfeeling as thou art,
Than all the living forms could be,
Save her who placed thee next my heart.

She placed it, sad, with needless fear,
Lest time might shake my wavering soul,
Unconscious that her image there
Held every sense in fast control.

Through hours, through years, through time,
'twill cheer;
My hope, in gloomy moments, raise;
In life's last conflict 'twill appear,
And meet my fond expiring gaze.

TO LESBIA.

LESBIA! since far from you I've ranged,
Our souls with fond affection glow not;
You say 'tis I, not you, have changed,
I'd tell you why, but yet I know not.

Your polish'd brow no cares have crost;
And, Lesbia! we are not much older
Since, trembling, first my heart I lost,
Or told my love, with hope grown bolder.

Sixteen was then our utmost age,
Two years have lingering pass'd away, love!
And now new thoughts our minds engage,
At least I feel disposed to stray, love!

'Tis I that am alone to blame,
I that am guilty of love's treason;
Since your sweet breast is still the same,
Caprice must be my only reason.

I do not, love! suspect your truth,
With jealous doubt my bosom heaves not;
Warm was the passion of my youth,
One trace of dark deceit it leaves not.

No, no, my flame was not pretended;
For, oh! I loved you most sincerely;
And—though our dream at last is ended—
My bosom still esteems you dearly.

No more we meet in yonder bowers;
Absence has made me prone to roving!
But older, firmer hearts than ours
Have found monotony in loving.

Your cheek's soft bloom is unimpair'd,
New beauties still are daily bright'ning,
Your eye for conquest beams prepared,
The forge of love's resistless lightning.

Arm'd thus, to make their bosoms bleed,
Many will throng to sigh like me, love!
More constant they may prove, indeed;
Fonder, alas! they ne'er can be, love!

LINES ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY,

WHO HAD BEEN ALARMED BY A BULLET FIRED BY THE AUTHOR WHILE DISCHARGING HIS PISTOLS IN A GARDEN.

DOUBTLESS, sweet girl! the hissing lead,
Wafting destruction o'er thy charms,
And hurtling* o'er thy lovely head,
Has fill'd that breast with fond alarms.

Surely some envious demon's force,
Vex'd to behold such beauty here,
Impell'd the bullet's viewless course,
Diverted from its first career.

Yes! in that nearly fatal hour
The ball obey'd some hell-born guide;
But Heaven, with interposing power,
In pity turn'd the death aside.

Yet, as perchance one trembling tear
Upon that thrilling bosom fell,
Which I, the unconscious cause of fear,
Extracted from its glistening cell:

Say, what dire penance can atone
For such an outrage done to thee?
Arraign'd before thy beauty's throne,
What punishment wilt thou decree?

Might I perform the judge's part,
The sentence I should scarce deplore;
It only would restore a heart
Which but belong'd to thee before.

The least atonement I can make
Is to become no longer free;
Henceforth I breathe but for thy sake,
Thou shalt be all in all to me.

But thou, perhaps, may'st now reject
Such expiation of my guilt:
Come, then, some other mode elect;
Let it be death, or what thou wilt.

Choose, then, relentless! and I swear
Nought shall thy dread decree prevent;
Yet hold—one little word forbear!
Let it be aught but banishment.

* This word is used by Gray, in his poem to the Fatal Sisters:—
"Iron sleet of arrowy shower
Hurtles through the darkened air."

LOVE'S LAST ADIEU.

Ἀει, δ' ἀει με φευγει.—ANACREON.

THE roses of love glad the garden of life,
Though nurtured 'mid weeds dropping pestilent dew,
Till time crops the leaves with unmerciful knife,
Or prunes them for ever, in love's last adieu!

In vain with endearments we soothe the sad heart,
In vain do we vow for an age to be true;
The chance of an hour may command us to part,
Or death disunite us in love's last adieu!

Still Hope, breathing peace through the grief-swollen breast,
Will whisper, "Our meeting we yet may renew:"
With this dream of deceit half our sorrow's represt,
Nor taste we the poison of love's last adieu!

Oh! mark you yon pair: in the sunshine of youth
Love twined round their childhood his flowers as they grew;
They flourish awhile in the season of truth,
Till chill'd by the winter of love's last adieu!

Sweet lady! why thus doth a tear steal its way
Down a cheek which outrivals thy bosom in hue?
Yet why do I ask?—to distraction a prey,
Thy reason has perish'd with love's last adieu!

Oh! who is yon misanthrope, shunning mankind?
From cities to caves of the forest he flew:
There, raving, he howls his complaint to the wind;
The mountains reverberate love's last adieu!

Now hate rules a heart which in love's easy chains
Once passion's tumultuous blandishments knew,
Despair now inflames the dark tide of his veins;
He ponders in frenzy on love's last adieu!

How he envies the wretch with a soul wrapt in steel!
His pleasures are scarce, yet his troubles are few,
Who laughs at the pang that he never can feel,
And dreads not the anguish of love's last adieu!

Youth flies, life decays, even hope is o'ercast;
No more with love's former devotion we sue:
He spreads his young wing, he retires with the blast;
The shroud of affection is love's last adieu!

In this life of probation for rapture divine,
Astrea declares that some penance is due;
From him who has worshipp'd at love's gentle shrine,
The atonement is ample in love's last adieu!

Who kneels to the god, on his altar of light
Must myrtle and cypress alternately strew:
His myrtle, an emblem of purest delight;
His cypress the garland of love's last adieu!

DAMÆTAS.

In law an infant, and in years a boy,*
In mind a slave to every vicious joy;
From every sense of shame and virtue wean'd;
In lies an adept, in deceit a fiend;
Versed in hypocrisy, while yet a child;
Fickle as wind, of inclinations wild;
Woman his dupe, his heedless friend a tool;
Old in the world, though scarcely broke from school;
Damætas ran through all the maze of sin,
And found the goal when others just begin:
Even still conflicting passions shake his soul,
And bid him drain the dregs of pleasure's bowl;
But, pall'd with vice, he breaks his former chain,
And what was once his bliss appears his bane.

TO MARION.

Marion! why that pensive brow?
What disgust to life hast thou?
Change that discontented air;
Frowns become not one so fair.
'Tis not love disturbs thy rest,
Love 's a stranger to thy breast;
He in dimpling smiles appears,
Or mourns in sweetly timid tears,
Or bends the languid eyelid down,
But shuns the cold forbidding frown.
Then resume thy former fire,
Some will love, and all admire;
While that icy aspect chills us,
Nought but cool indifference thrills us.
Wouldst thou wandering hearts beguile,
Smile at least, or seem to smile.
Eyes like thine were never meant
To hide their orbs in dark restraint;
Spite of all thou fain wouldst say,
Still in truant beams they play.
Thy lips—but here my modest Muse
Her impulse chaste must needs refuse:
She blushes, curt'sies, frowns—in short, she
Dreads lest the subject should transport me;
And flying off in search of reason,
Brings prudence back in proper season.
All I shall therefore say (whate'er
I think, is neither here nor there)
Is, that such lips, of looks endearing,
Were form'd for better things than sneering:
Of smoothing compliments divested,
Advice at least 's disinterested;
Such is my artless song to thee,
From all the flow of flattery free;

*In law, every person is an infant who has not attained the age of twenty-one.

Counsel like mine is like a brother's.
My heart is given to some others;
That is to say, unskill'd to cozen,
It shares itself among a dozen.
Marion, adieu! oh, pr'ythee, slight not
This warning, though it may delight not;
And, lest my precepts be displeasing
To those who think remonstrance teasing,
At once I'll tell thee our opinion
Concerning woman's soft dominion:
Howe'er we gaze with admiration
On eyes of blue or lips carnation,
Howe'er the flowing locks attract us,
Howe'er those beauties may distract us,
Still fickle, we are prone to rove,
These cannot fix our souls to love:
It is not too severe a stricture
To say they form a pretty picture;
But wouldst thou see the secret chain
Which binds us in your humble train,
To hail you queens of all creation,
Know, in a word, 'tis ANIMATION.

TO A LADY,

WHO PRESENTED TO THE AUTHOR A LOCK OF HAIR BRAIDED WITH HIS OWN, AND APPOINTED A NIGHT IN DECEMBER TO MEET HIM IN THE GARDEN.

THESE locks, which fondly thus entwine,
In firmer chains our hearts confine
Than all the unmeaning protestations
Which swell with nonsense love orations.
Our love is fix'd, I think we've proved it,
Nor time, nor place, nor art have moved it;
Then wherefore should we sigh and whine,
With groundless jealousy repine,
With silly whims and fancies frantic,
Merely to make our love romantic?
Why should you weep like Lydia Languish,
And fret with self-created anguish;
Or doom the lover you have chosen,
On winter nights to sigh half frozen;
In leafless shades to sue for pardon,
Only because the scene 's a garden?
For gardens seem, by one consent,
Since Shakspeare set the precedent,
Since Juliet first declared her passion,
To form the place of assignation.*

* In the above little piece, the author has been accused by some *candid readers* of introducing the name of a lady from whom he was some hundred miles distant at the time this was written; and poor Juliet, who has slept so long in "the tomb of all the Capulets," has been converted, with a trifling alteration of her name, into an English damsel, walking in a garden of their own creation, during the month of *December*, in a village where the author never passed a winter. Such has been the candor of some ingenious critics. We would advise these *liberal* commentators on taste and arbiters of decorum to read *Shakspeare*.

Oh! would some modern muse inspire,
And seat her by a sea-coal fire;
Or had the bard at Christmas written,
And laid the scene of love in Britain,
He surely, in commiseration,
Had changed the place of declaration.
In Italy I've no objection:
Warm nights are proper for reflection;
But here our climate is so rigid,
That love itself is rather frigid:
Think on our chilly situation,
And curb this rage for imitation;
Then let us meet, as oft we've done,
Beneath the influence of the sun;
Or, if at midnight I must meet you,
Within your mansion let me greet you:
There we can love for hours together,
Much better in such snowy weather,
Than placed in all the Arcadian groves
That ever witness'd rural loves;
Then, if my passion fail to please,
Next night I'll be content to freeze;
No more I'll give a loose to laughter,
But curse my fate for ever after.*

OSCAR OF ALVA.†

A TALE.

How sweetly shines through azure skies
The lamp of heaven on Lora's shore;
Where Alva's hoary turrets rise,
And hear the din of arms no more.

But often has yon rolling moon
On Alva's casques of silver play'd;
And view'd at midnight's silent noon,
Her chiefs in gleaming mail array'd.

And on the crimson'd rocks beneath,
Which scowl o'er ocean's sullen flow,
Pale in the scatter'd ranks of death,
She saw the gasping warrior low;

While many an eye which ne'er again
Could mark the rising orb of day,
Turn'd feebly from the gory plain,
Beheld in death her fading ray.

* Having heard that a very severe and indelicate censure has been passed on the above poem, I beg leave to reply in a quotation from an admired work, "Carr's Stranger in France: "—"As we were contemplating a painting on a large scale, in which, among other figures, is the uncovered whole length of a warrior, a prudish-looking lady, who seemed to have touched the age of desperation, after having attentively surveyed it through her glass, observed to her party, that there was a great deal of indecorum in that picture. Madame S. shrewdly whispered in my ear, that the indecorum was in the remark."

† The catastrophe of this tale was suggested by the story of "Jeronyme and Lorenzo," in the first volume of Schiller's "Armenian; or, The Ghost-Seer." It also bears some resemblance to a scene in the third act of "Macbeth."

Once to those eyes the lamp of Love,
They blest her dear propitious light;
But now she glimmer'd from above,
A sad, funereal torch of night.

Faded is Alva's noble race,
And gray her towers are seen afar;
No more her heroes urge the chase,
Or roll the crimson tide of war.

But who was last of Alva's clan?
Why grows the moss on Alva's stone?
Her towers resound no steps of man,
They echo to the gale alone.

And when that gale is fierce and high,
A sound is heard in yonder hall:
It rises hoarsely through the sky,
And vibrates o'er the mouldering wall.

Yes, when the eddying tempest sighs,
It shakes the shield of Oscar brave;
But there no more his banners rise,
No more his plumes of sable wave.

Fair shone the sun on Oscar's birth,
When Angus hail'd his eldest born;
The vassals round their chieftain's hearth
Crowd to applaud the happy morn.

They feast upon the mountain deer,
The pibroch raised its piercing note:
To gladden more their highland cheer,
The strains in martial numbers float:

And they who heard the war-notes wild,
Hoped that one day the pibroch's strain
Should play before the hero's child
While he should lead the tartan train.

Another year is quickly past,
And Angus hails another son;
His natal day is like the last,
Nor soon the jocund feast was done.

Taught by their sire to bend the bow,
On Alva's dusky hills of wind,
The boys in childhood chased the roe,
And left their hounds in speed behind.

But ere their years of youth are o'er,
They mingle in the ranks of war;
They lightly wheel the bright claymore,
And send the whistling arrow far.

Dark was the flow of Oscar's hair,
Wildly it stream'd along the gale;
But Allan's locks were bright and fair,
And pensive seem'd his cheek, and pale.

But Oscar own'd a hero's soul,
His dark eye shone through beams of truth;
Allan had early learn'd control,
And smooth his words had been from youth.

Both, both were brave: the Saxon spear
Was shiver'd oft beneath their steel;
And Oscar's bosom scorn'd to fear,
But Oscar's bosom knew to feel;

While Allan's soul belied his form,
Unworthy with such charms to dwell:
Keen as the lightning of the storm,
On foes his deadly vengeance fell.

From high Southannon's distant tower
Arrived a young and noble dame;
With Kenneth's lands to form her dower,
Glenalvon's blue-eyed daughter came;

And Oscar claim'd the beauteous bride,
And Angus on his Oscar smiled;
It soothed the father's feudal pride
Thus to obtain Glenalvon's child.

Hark to the pibroch's pleasing note!
Hark to the swelling nuptial song!
In joyous strains the voices float,
And still the choral peal prolong.

See how the heroes' blood-red plumes
Assembled wave in Alva's hall;
Each youth his varied plaid assumes,
Attending on their chieftain's call.

It is not war their aid demands,
The pibroch plays the song of peace;
To Oscar's nuptials throng the bands,
Nor yet the sounds of pleasure cease.

But where is Oscar? sure 'tis late:
Is this a bridegroom's ardent flame?
While thronging guests and ladies wait,
Nor Oscar nor his brother came.

At length young Allan join'd the bride;
"Why comes not Oscar?" Angus said:
"Is he not here?" the youth replied;
"With me he roved not o'er the glade.

"Perchance, forgetful of the day,
'Tis his to chase the bounding roe;
Or ocean's waves prolong his stay;
Yet Oscar's bark is seldom slow."

"Oh, no!" the anguish'd sire rejoin'd,
"Nor chase nor wave my boy delay;
Would he to Mora seem unkind?
Would aught to her impede his way?

"Oh, search, ye chiefs! oh, search around!
Allan, with these through Alva fly;
Till Oscar, till my son is found,
Haste, haste, nor dare attempt reply."

All is confusion—through the vale
The name of Oscar hoarsely rings,
It rises on the murmuring gale,
Till night expands her dusky wings;

It breaks the stillness of the night,
But echoes through her shades in vain,
It sounds through morning's misty light,
But Oscar comes not o'er the plain.

Three days, three sleepless nights, the Chief
For Oscar search'd each mountain cave!
Then hope is lost; in boundless grief,
His locks in gray torn ringlets wave.

"Oscar, my son!—thou God of heaven
Restore the prop of sinking age!
Or if that hope no more is given,
Yield his assassin to my rage:

"Yes, on some desert rocky shore
My Oscar's whiten'd bones must lie;
Then grant, thou God! I ask no more,
With him his frantic sire may die!

"Yet he may live—away, despair!
Be calm, my soul! he yet may live;
To arraign my fate, my voice forbear!
O God! my impious prayer forgive.

"What, if he live for me no more,
I sink forgotten in the dust,
The hope of Alva's age is o'er;
Alas! can pangs like these be just?"

Thus did the hapless parent mourn,
Till Time, which soothes severest woe,
Had bade serenity return,
And made the tear-drop cease to flow.

For still some latent hope survived
That Oscar might once more appear:
His hope now droop'd and now revived,
Till Time had told a tedious year.

Days roll'd along, the orb of light
Again had run his destined race,
No Oscar bless'd his father's sight,
And sorrow left a fainter trace.

For youthful Allan still remain'd,
And now his father's only joy:
And Mora's heart was quickly gain'd,
For beauty crown'd the fair-hair'd boy.

She thought that Oscar low was laid,
And Allan's face was wondrous fair:
If Oscar lived, some other maid
Had claim'd his faithless bosom's care.

And Angus said, if one year more
In fruitless hope was pass'd away,
His fondest scruples should be o'er,
And he would name their nuptial day.

Slow roll'd the moons, but blest at last
Arrived the dearly destined morn;
The year of anxious trembling past,
What smiles the lovers' cheeks adorn!

Hark to the pibroch's pleasing note!
Hark to the swelling nuptial song!
In joyous strains the voices float,
And still the choral peal prolong.

Again the clan, in festive crowd,
Throng through the gate of Alva's hall;
The sounds of mirth re-echo loud,
And all their former joy recall.

But who is he, whose darken'd brow
Glooms in the midst of general mirth?
Before his eyes' far fiercer glow
The blue flames curdle o'er the hearth.

Dark is the robe which wraps his form,
And tall his plume of gory red;
His voice is like the rising storm,
But light and trackless is his tread.

'Tis noon of night, the pledge goes round,
The bridegroom's health is deeply quaff'd;
With shouts the vaulted roofs resound,
And all combine to hail the draught.

Sudden the stranger-chief arose,
And all the clamorous crowd are hush'd;
And Angus' cheek with wonder glows,
And Mora's tender bosom blush'd.

"Old man!" he cried, "this pledge is done!
Thou saw'st 'twas duly drunk by me:
It hail'd the nuptials of thy son:
Now will I claim a pledge from thee.

"While all around is mirth and joy,
To bless thy Allan's happy lot,
Say, hadst thou ne'er another boy?
Say, why should Oscar be forgot?"

"Alas!" the hapless sire replied,
The big tear starting as he spoke,
"When Oscar left my hall, or died,
This aged heart was almost broke.

"Thrice has the earth revolved her course
Since Oscar's form has bless'd my sight:
And Allan is my last resource,
Since martial Oscar's death or flight."

"'Tis well," replied the stranger stern,
And fiercely flash'd his rolling eye;
"Thy Oscar's fate I fain would learn:
Perhaps the hero did not die.

"Perchance, if those whom most he loved
Would call, thy Oscar might return;
Perchance the chief has only roved;
For him thy beltane yet may burn.*

"Fill high the bowl the table round,
We will not claim the pledge by stealth;
With wine let every cup be crown'd;
Pledge me departed Oscar's health."

"With all my soul," old Angus said,
And fill'd his goblet to the brim;
"Here 's to my boy! alive or dead,
I ne'er shall find a son like him."

"Bravely, old man, this health has sped;
But why does trembling Allan stand?
Come, drink remembrance of the dead,
And raise thy cup with firmer hand."

The crimson glow of Allan's face
Was turn'd at once to ghastly hue;
The drops of death each other chase
Adown in agonizing dew.

Thrice did he raise the goblet high,
And thrice his lips refused to taste;
For thrice he caught the stranger's eye
On his with deadly fury placed.

"And is it thus a brother hails
A brother's fond remembrance here?
If thus affection's strength prevails,
What might we not expect from fear?"

Roused by the sneer, he raised the bowl,
"Would Oscar now could share our mirth!"
Internal fear appall'd his soul;
He said, and dash'd the cup to earth.

"'Tis he! I hear my murderer's voice!"
Loud shrieks a darkly gleaming form;
"A murderer's voice!" the roof replies,
And deeply swells the bursting storm.

* Beltane Tree, a Highland festival on the first of May, held near fires lighted for the occasion.

The tapers wink, the chieftains shrink,
The stranger's gone—amidst the crew
A form was seen in tartan green,
And tall the shade terrific grew.

His waist was bound with a broad belt round,
His plume of sable stream'd on high;
But his breast was bare, with the red wounds there,
And fix'd was the glare of his glassy eye.

And thrice he smiled, with his eye so wild,
On Angus bending low the knee;
And thrice he frown'd on a chief on the ground,
Whom shivering crowds with horror see.

The bolts loud roll, from pole to pole
The thunders through the welkin ring,
And the gleaming form, through the mist of the storm,
Was borne on high by the whirlwind's wing.

Cold was the feast, the revel ceased;
Who lies upon the stony floor?
Oblivion press'd old Angus' breast,
At length his life-pulse throbs once more.

"Away! away! let the leech essay
To pour the light on Allan's eyes:"
His sand is done—his race is run;
Oh! never more shall Allan rise!

But Oscar's breast is cold as clay,
His locks are lifted by the gale:
And Allan's barbed arrow lay
With him in dark Glentanar's vale.

And whence the dreadful stranger came,
Or who, no mortal wight can tell;
But no one doubts the form of flame,
For Alva's sons knew Oscar well.

Ambition nerved young Allan's hand,
Exulting demons wing'd his dart;
While Envy waved her burning brand,
And pour'd her venom round his heart.

Swift is the shaft from Allan's bow;
Whose streaming life-blood stains his side?
Dark Oscar's sable crest is low,
The dart has drunk his vital tide.

And Mora's eye could Allan move,
She bade his wounded pride rebel;
Alas! that eyes which beam'd with love
Should urge the soul to deeds of hell.

Lo! seest thou not a lonely tomb
Which rises o'er a warrior dead?
It glimmers through the twilight gloom;
Oh! that is Allan's nuptial bed.

Far, distant far, the noble grave
Which held his clan's great ashes stood;
And o'er his corse no banners wave,
For they were stain'd with kindred blood.

What minstrel gray, what hoary bard,
Shall Allan's deeds on harp-strings raise?
The song is glory's chief reward,
But who can strike a murderer's praise?

Unstrung, untouch'd, the harp must stand,
No minstrel dare the theme awake;
Guilt would benumb his palsied hand,
His harp in shuddering chords would break.

No lyre of fame, no hallow'd verse,
Shall sound his glories high in air:
A dying father's bitter curse,
A brother's death-groan echoes there.

THE EPISODE OF NISUS AND EURYALUS.

A PARAPHRASE FROM THE ÆNEID, LIB. IX.

Nisus, the guardian of the portal, stood,
Eager to gild his arms with hostile blood;
Well skill'd in fight the quivering lance to wield,
Or pour his arrows through the embattled field:
From Ida torn, he left his sylvan cave,
And sought a foreign home, a distant grave.
To watch the movements of the Daunian host,
With him Euryalus sustains the post;
No lovelier mien adorn'd the ranks of Troy,
And beardless bloom yet graced the gallant boy;
Though few the seasons of his youthful life,
As yet a novice in the martial strife,
'Twas his, with beauty, valor's gifts to share—
A soul heroic, as his form was fair:
These burn with one pure flame of generous love;
In peace, in war, united still they move;
Friendship and glory form their joint reward;
And now combined they hold their nightly guard.

"What god," exclaim'd the first, "instills this fire?
Or, in itself a god, what great desire?
My laboring soul, with anxious thought oppress'd,
Abhors the station of inglorious rest;
The love of fame with this can ill accord,
Be't mine to seek for glory with my sword.
Seest thou yon camp, with torches twinkling dim,
Where drunken slumbers wrap each lazy limb?
Where confidence and ease the watch disdain,
And drowsy Silence holds her sable reign?
Then hear my thought:—In deep and sullen grief
Our troops and leaders mourn their absent chief:
Now could the gifts and promised prize be thine
(The deed, the danger, and the fame be mine),

Were this decreed, beneath yon rising mound,
Methinks, an easy path perchance were found:
Which pass'd, I speed my way to Pallas' walls,
And lead Æneas from Evander's halls."

With equal ardor fired, and warlike joy,
His glowing friend address'd the Dardan boy:—
"These deeds, my Nisus, shalt thou dare alone?
Must all the fame, the peril, be thine own?
Am I by thee despised, and left afar,
As one unfit to share the toils of war?
Not thus his son the great Opheltes taught;
Not thus my sire in Argive combats fought;
Not thus, when Ilion fell by heavenly hate,
I track'd Æneas through the walks of fate:
Thou know'st my deeds, my breast devoid of fear,
And hostile life-drops dim my gory spear.
Here is a soul with hope immortal burns,
And life, ignoble life, for *glory* spurns.
Fame, fame is cheaply earn'd by fleeting breath:
The price of honor is the sleep of death."

Then Nisus:—"Calm thy bosom's fond alarms,
Thy heart beats fiercely to the din of arms.
More dear thy worth and valor than my own,
I swear by him who fills Olympus' throne!
So may I triumph, as I speak the truth,
And clasp again the comrade of my youth!
But should I fall,—and he who dares advance
Through hostile legions must abide by chance,—
If some Rutulian arm, with adverse blow,
Should lay the friend who ever loved thee low,
Live thou, such beauties I would fain preserve,
Thy budding years a lengthen'd term deserve.
When humbled in the dust, let some one be
Whose gentle eyes will shed one tear for me;
Whose manly arm may snatch me back by force,
Or wealth redeem from foes my captive corse;
Or, if my destiny these last deny,
If in the spoiler's power my ashes lie,
Thy pious care may raise a simple tomb,
To mark thy love, and signalize my doom.
Why should thy doting wretched mother weep
Her only boy, reclined in endless sleep?
Who, for thy sake, the tempest's fury dared,
Who, for thy sake, war's deadly peril shared;
Who braved what woman never braved before,
And left her native for the Latian shore."
"In vain you damp the ardor of my soul,"
Replied Euryalus: "it scorns control!
Hence, let us haste!"—their brother guards arose,
Roused by their call, nor court again repose;
The pair, buoy'd up on Hope's exulting wing,
Their stations leave, and speed to seek the king.

Now o'er the earth a solemn stillness ran,
And lull'd alike the cares of brute and man;

Save where the Dardan leaders nightly he
Alternate converse, and their plans unfold.
On one great point the council are agreed,
An instant message to their prince decreed;
Each lean'd upon the lance he well could wield,
And pois'd with easy arm his ancient shield;
When Nisus and his friend their leave request
To offer something to their high behest.
With anxious tremors, yet unawed by fear,
The faithful pair before the throne appear:
Iulus greets them; at his kind command,
The elder first address'd the hoary band.

"With patience" (thus Hyrtacides began)
"Attend, nor judge from youth our humble plan.
Where yonder beacons half expiring beam,
Our slumbering foes of future conquests dream,
Nor heed that we a secret path have traced,
Between the ocean and the portal placed,
Beneath the covert of the blackening smoke,
Whose shade securely our design will cloak!
If you, ye chiefs, and fortune will allow,
We'll bend our course to yonder mountain's brow,
Where Pallas' walls at distance meet the sight,
Seen o'er the glade, when not obscured by night:
Then shall Æneas in his pride return,
While hostile matrons raise their offspring's urn;
And Latian spoils and purpled heaps of dead
Shall mark the havoc of our hero's tread.
Such is our purpose, not unknown the way;
Where yonder torrent's devious waters stray,
Oft have we seen, when hunting by the stream,
The distant spires above the valley's gleam."

Mature in years, for sober wisdom famed,
Moved by the speech, Alethes here exclaim'd:
"Ye parent gods! who rule the fate of Troy,
Still dwells the Dardan spirit in the boy;
When minds like these in striplings thus ye raise,
Yours is the godlike act, be yours the praise;
In gallant youth, my fainting hopes revive,
And Ilion's wonted glories still survive."
Then in his warm embrace the boys he press'd,
And quivering, strain'd them to his aged breast;
With tears the burning cheek of each bedew'd,
And, sobbing, thus his first discourse renew'd:
"What gift, my countrymen, what martial prize
Can ye bestow, which you may not despise?
Our deities the first best boon have given—
Internal virtues are the gift of Heaven.
What poor rewards can bless your deeds on earth,
Doubtless await such young, exalted worth.
Æneas and Ascanius shall combine
To yield applause far, far surpassing mine."
Iulus then:—"By all the powers above!
By those Penates who my country love!

By hoary Vesta's sacred fane, I swear,
My hopes are all in you, ye generous pair!
Restore my father to my grateful sight,
And all my sorrows yield to one delight.
Nisus! two silver goblets are thine own,
Saved from Arisba's stately domes o'erthrown!
My sire secured them on that fatal day,
Nor left such bowls an Argive robber's prey:
Two massy tripods, also, shall be thine;
Two talents polish'd from the glittering mine;
An ancient cup, which Tyrian Dido gave,
While yet our vessels press'd the Punic wave:
But when the hostile chiefs at length bow down,
When great Æneas wears Hesperia's crown,
The casque, the buckler, and the fiery steed
Which Turnus guides with more than mortal speed,
Are thine; no envious lot shall then be cast,
I pledge my word, irrevocably past:
Nay more, twelve slaves, and twice six captive dames,
To soothe thy softer hours with amorous flames,
And all the realms which now the Latins sway,
The labors of to-night shall well repay.
But thou, my generous youth, whose tender years
Are near my own, whose worth my heart reveres,
Henceforth affection, sweetly thus begun,
Shall join our bosoms and our souls in one;
Without thy aid, no glory shall be mine;
Without thy dear advice, no great design;
Alike through life esteem'd, thou godlike boy,
In war my bulwark, and in peace my joy."

To him Euryalus:—"No day shall shame
The rising glories which from this I claim.
Fortune may favor, or the skies may frown,
But valor, spite of fate, obtains renown.
Yet, ere from hence our eager steps depart,
One boon I beg, the nearest to my heart:
My mother, sprung from Priam's royal line,
Like thine ennobled, hardly less divine,
Nor Troy, nor king Acestes' realms restrain
Her feeble age from dangers of the main;
Alone she came, all selfish fears above,
A bright example of maternal love.
Unknown the secret enterprise I brave,
Lest grief should bend my parent to the grave;
From this alone no fond adieus I seek,
No fainting mother's lips have press'd my cheek;
By gloomy night and thy right hand I vow
Her parting tears would shake my purpose now:
Do thou, my prince, her failing age sustain,
In thee her much-loved child may live again;
Her dying hours with pious conduct bless,
Assist her wants, relieve her fond distress:
So dear a hope must all my soul inflame,
To rise in glory, or to fall in fame."
Struck with a filial care so deeply felt,

In tears at once the Trojan warriors melt:
Faster than all, Iulus' eyes o'erflow;
Such love was his, and such had been his woe.
"All thou hast asked, receive," the prince replied;
"Nor this alone, but many a gift beside.
To cheer thy mother's years shall be my aim,
Creusa's style but wanting to the dame.*
Fortune an adverse, wayward course may run,
But bless'd thy mother in so dear a son.
Now, by my life!—my sire's most sacred oath—
To thee I pledge my full, my firmest troth,
All the rewards which once to thee were vow'd,
If thou shouldst fall, on her shall be bestow'd."
Thus spoke the weeping prince, then forth to view
A gleaming falchion from the sheath he drew;
Lycaon's utmost skill had graced the steel,
For friends to envy and for foes to feel:
A tawny hide, the Moorish lion's spoil,
Slain 'midst the forest, in the hunter's toil,
Mnestheus to guard the elder youth bestows,
And old Alethes' casque defends his brows.
Arm'd, thence they go, while all the assembled train,
To aid their cause, implore the gods in vain.
More than a boy in wisdom and in grace,
Iulus holds amidst the chiefs his place:
His prayer he sends; but what can prayers avail,
Lost in the murmurs of the sighing gale!

The trench is pass'd, and, favor'd by the night,
Through sleeping foes they wheel their wary flight.
When shall the sleep of many a foe be o'er?
Alas! some slumber who shall wake no more!
Chariots and bridles, mix'd with arms, are seen;
And flowing flasks, and scatter'd troops between:
Bacchus and Mars to rule the camp combine;
A mingled chaos this of war and wine.
"Now," cries the first, "for deeds of blood prepare,
With me the conquest and the labor share:
Here lies our path; lest any hand arise,
Watch thou, while many a dreaming chieftain dies:
I'll carve our passage through the heedless foe,
And clear thy road with many a deadly blow."
His whispering accents then the youth repress'd,
And pierced proud Rhamnes through his panting breast:
Stretch'd at his ease, th' incautious king reposed;
Debauch, and not fatigue, his eyes had closed:
To Turnus dear, a prophet and a prince,
His omens more than augur's skill evince;
But he, who thus foretold the fate of all,
Could not avert his own untimely fall.
Next Remus' armor-bearer, hapless, fell,
And three unhappy slaves the carnage swell;
The charioteer along his coursers' sides
Expires, the steel his sever'd neck divides;

* The mother of Iulus, lost on the night when Troy was taken.

And, last, his lord is number'd with the dead:
Bounding convulsive, flies the gasping head;
From the swoln veins the blackening torrents pour;
Stain'd is the couch and earth with clotting gore.
Young Lamyrus and Lamus next expire,
And gay Serranus, fill'd with youthful fire;
Half the long night in childish games was pass'd;
Lull'd by the potent grape, he slept at last;
Ah! happier far had he the morn survey'd,
And till Aurora's dawn his skill display'd.

In slaughter'd fold, the keepers lost in sleep,
His hungry fangs a lion thus may steep;
'Mid the sad flock, at dead of night he prowls,
With murder glutted, and in carnage rolls:
Insatiate still, through teeming herds he roams;
In seas of gore the lordly tyrant foams.

Nor less the other's deadly vengeance came,
But falls on feeble crowds without a name;
His wound unconscious Fadus scarce can feel,
Yet wakeful Rhæsus sees the threatening steel;
His coward breast behind a jar he hides,
And vainly in the weak defence confides;
Full in his heart, the falchion search'd his veins,
The reeking weapon bears alternate stains;
Through wine and blood, commingling as they flow,
One feeble spirit seeks the shades below.
Now where Messapus dwelt they bend their way,
Whose fires emit a faint and trembling ray;
There, unconfined, behold each grazing steed,
Unwatch'd, unheeded, on the herbage feed:
Brave Nisus here arrests his comrade's arm,
Too flush'd with carnage, and with conquest warm:
"Hence let us haste, the dangerous path is pass'd;
Full foes enough to-night have breathed their last:
Soon will the day those eastern clouds adorn;
Now let us speed, nor tempt the rising morn."

With silver arms, with various art emboss'd,
What bowls and mantles in confusion toss'd,
They leave regardless! yet one glittering prize
Attracts the younger hero's wandering eyes;
The gilded harness Rhamnes' coursers felt,
The gems which stud the monarch's golden belt:
This from the pallid corse was quickly torn,
Once by a line of former chieftains worn.
The exulting boy the studded girdle wears,
Messapus' helm his head in triumph bears;
Then from the tents their cautious steps they bend,
To seek the vale where safer paths extend.

Just at this hour, a band of Latian horse
To Turnus' camp pursue their destined course:
While the slow foot their tardy march delay,
The knights, impatient, spur along the way:

Three hundred mail-clad men, by Volscens led,
To Turnus with their master's promise sped;
Now they approach the trench, and view the walls,
When, on the left, a light reflection falls;
The plunder'd helmet, through the waning night,
Sheds forth a silver radiance, glancing bright.
Volscens with question loud the pair alarms:—
"Stand, stragglers! stand! why early thus in arms?
From whence, to whom?"—He meets with no reply:
Trusting the covert of the night, they fly:
The thicket's depth with hurried pace they tread,
While round the wood the hostile squadron spread.

With brakes entangled, scarce a path between,
Dreary and dark appears the sylvan scene:
Euryalus his heavy spoils impede,
The boughs and winding turns his steps mislead;
But Nisus scours along the forest's maze
To where Latinus' steeds in safety graze,
Then backward o'er the plain his eyes extend,
On every side they seek his absent friend.
"O God! my boy," he cries, "of me bereft,
In what impending perils art thou left!"
Listening he runs—above the waving trees,
Tumultuous voices swell the passing breeze;
The war-cry rises, thundering hoofs around
Wake the dark echoes of the trembling ground.
Again he turns, of footsteps hears the noise;
The sound elates, the sight his hope destroys:
The hapless boy a ruffian train surround,
While lengthening shades his weary way confound;
Him with loud shouts the furious knights pursue,
Struggling in vain, a captive to the crew.
What can his friend 'gainst thronging numbers dare?
Ah! must he rush, his comrade's fate to share?
What force, what aid, what stratagem essay,
Back to redeem the Latian spoiler's prey?
His life a votive ransom nobly give,
Or die with him for whom he wish'd to live?
Poising with strength his lifted lance on high,
On Luna's orb he cast his frenzied eye:—
"Goddess serene, transcending every star!
Queen of the sky, whose beams are seen afar!
By night heaven owns thy sway, by day the grove,
When, as chaste Dian, here thou deign'st to rove:
If e'er myself, or sire, have sought to grace
Thine altars with the produce of the chase,
Speed, speed my dart to pierce yon vaunting crowd,
To free my friend, and scatter far the proud."
Thus having said, the hissing dart he flung;
Through parted shades the hurtling weapon sung;
The thirsty point in Sulmo's entrails lay,
Transfix'd his heart, and stretch'd him on the clay:
He sobs, he dies—the troop in wild amaze,
Unconscious whence the death, with horror gaze;

While pale they stare, through Tagus' temples riven,
A second shaft with equal force is driven.
Fierce Volscens rolls around his low'ring eyes;
Veil'd by the night, secure the Trojan lies.
Burning with wrath, he view'd his soldiers fall:
"Thou youth accurst, thy life shall pay for all!"
Quick from the sheath his flaming glaive he drew,
And, raging, on the boy defenceless flew.
Nisus no more the blackening shape conceals,
Forth, forth he starts, and all his love reveals;
Aghast, confused, his fears to madness rise,
And pour these accents, shrieking as he flies:
"Me, me—your vengeance hurl on me alone;
Here sheathe the steel, my blood is all your own.
Ye starry spheres! thou conscious Heaven! attest!
He could not—durst not—lo! the guile confest!
All, all was mine,—his early fate suspend;
He only loved too well his hapless friend:
Spare, spare, ye chiefs! from him your rage remove;
His fault was friendship, all his crime was love."
He pray'd in vain; the dark assassin's sword
Pierced the fair side, the snowy bosom gored;
Lowly to earth inclines his plume-clad crest,
And sanguine torrents mantle o'er his breast:
As some young rose, whose blossom scents the air,
Languid in death, expires beneath the share;
Or crimson poppy, sinking with the shower,
Declining gently, falls a fading flower;
Thus, sweetly drooping, bends his lovely head,
And lingering beauty hovers round the dead.

But fiery Nisus stems the battle's tide,
Revenge his leader, and Despair his guide:
Volscens he seeks amidst the gathering host,
Volscens must soon appease his comrade's ghost;
Steel, flashing, pours on steel, foe crowds on foe;
Rage nerves his arm, fate gleams in every blow;
In vain beneath unnumber'd wounds he bleeds,
Nor wounds, nor death, distracted Nisus heeds;
In viewless circles wheel'd, his falchion flies,
Nor quits the hero's grasp till Volscens dies;
Deep in his throat its end the weapon found,
The tyrant's soul fled groaning through the wound.
Thus Nisus all his fond affection proved—
Dying, revenged the fate of him he loved;
Then on his bosom sought his wonted place,
And death was heavenly in his friend's embrace.

Celestial pair! if aught my verse can claim,
Wafted on Time's broad pinion, yours is fame!
Ages on ages shall your fate admire,
No future day shall see your names expire,
While stands the Capitol, immortal dome!
And vanquish'd millions hail their empress, Rome!

TRANSLATION FROM THE MEDEA OF EURIPIDES.

When fierce conflicting passions urge
The breast where love is wont to glow,
What mind can stem the stormy surge
Which rolls the tide of human woe?
The hope of praise, the dread of shame,
Can rouse the tortured breast no more;
The wild desire, the guilty flame,
Absorbs each wish it felt before.

But if affection gently thrills
The soul by purer dreams possest,
The pleasing balm of mortal ills
In love can soothe the aching breast:
If thus thou comest in disguise,
Fair Venus! from thy native heaven,
What heart unfeeling would despise
The sweetest boon the gods have given?

But never from thy golden bow
May I beneath the shaft expire!
Whose creeping venom, sure and slow,
Awakes an all-consuming fire:
Ye racking doubts! ye jealous fears!
With others wage internal war;
Repentance, source of future tears,
From me be ever distant far!

May no distracting thoughts destroy
The holy calm of sacred love!
May all the hours be wing'd with joy,
Which hover faithful hearts above!
Fair Venus! on thy myrtle shrine
May I with some fond lover sigh,
Whose heart may mingle pure with mine—
With me to live, with me to die.

My native soil! beloved before,
Now dearer as my peaceful home,
Ne'er may I quit thy rocky shore,
A hapless banish'd wretch to roam!
This very day, this very hour,
May I resign this fleeting breath!
Nor quit my silent humble bower;
A doom to me far worse than death.

Have I not heard the exile's sigh?
And seen the exile's silent tear,
Through distant climes condemn'd to fly,
A pensive weary wanderer here?
Ah! hapless dame! no sire bewails,*
No friend thy wretched fate deplores,

Medea, who accompanied Jason to Corinth, was deserted by him for the daughter of Creon, king of that city. The chorus from which this is taken here addresses Medea; though a considerable liberty is taken with the original, by expanding the idea, as also in some other parts of the translation.

No kindred voice with rapture hails
Thy steps within a stranger's doors.

Perish the fiend whose iron heart,
To fair affection's truth unknown,
Bids her he fondly loved depart,
Unpitied, helpless, and alone;
Who ne'er unlocks with silver key*
The milder treasures of his soul—
May such a friend be far from me,
And ocean's storms between us roll!

THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY A COLLEGE EXAMINATION.

High in the midst, surrounded by his peers,
Magnus his ample front sublime uprears:†
Placed on his chair of state, he seems a god,
While Sophs and Freshmen tremble at his nod.
As all around sit wrapt in speechless gloom,
His voice in thunder shakes the sounding dome;
Denouncing dire reproach to luckless fools,
Unskill'd to plod in mathematic rules.

Happy the youth in Euclid's axioms tried,
Though little versed in any art beside;
Who, scarcely skill'd an English line to pen,
Scans Attic metres with a critic's ken.
What, though he knows not how his fathers bled,
When civil discord piled the fields with dead,
When Edward bade his conquering bands advance,
Or Henry trampled on the crest of France:
Though marvelling at the name of Magna Charta,
Yet well he recollects the law of Sparta:
Can tell what edicts sage Lycurgus made,
While Blackstone 's on the shelf neglected laid;
Of Grecian dramas vaunts the deathless fame,
Of Avon's bard remembering scarce the name.

Such is the youth whose scientific pate
Class-honors, medals, fellowships, await;
Or even, perhaps, the declamation prize,
If to such glorious height he lift his eyes.
But lo! no common orator can hope
The envied silver cup within his scope.
Not that our heads much eloquence require,
Th' Athenian's‡ glowing style, or Tully's fire.
A manner clear or warm is useless, since
We do not try by speaking to convince.

* The original means, literally, "disclosing the bright key of the mind."

† No reflection is here intended against the person mentioned under the name of Magnus. He is merely represented as performing an unavoidable function of his office. Indeed, such an attempt could only recoil upon myself; as that gentleman is now as much distinguished by his eloquence, and the dignified propriety with which he fills his situation, as he was in his younger days for wit and conviviality.

‡ Demosthenes.

Be other orators of pleasing proud:
We speak to please ourselves, not move the crowd:
Our gravity prefers the muttering tone,
A proper mixture of the squeak and groan:
No borrow'd grace of action must be seen,
The slightest motion would displease the Dean;
Whilst every staring graduate would prate
Against what he could never imitate.

The man who hopes t' obtain the promised cup
Must in one posture stand, and ne'er look up,
Nor stop, but rattle over every word—
No matter what, so it can *not* be heard.
Thus let him hurry on, nor think to rest:
Who speaks the fastest 's sure to speak the best;
Who utters most within the shortest space
May safely hope to win the wordy race.

The sons of science these, who, thus repaid,
Linger in ease in Granta's sluggish shade;
Where on Cam's sedgy bank supine they lie
Unknown, unhonor'd live, unwept for die:
Dull as the pictures which adorn their halls,
They think all learning fix'd within their walls;
In manners rude, in foolish forms precise,
All modern arts affecting to despise;
Yet prizing Bentley's, Brunck's, or Porson's note,*
More than the verse on which the critic wrote;
Vain as their honors, heavy as their ale,
Sad as their wit, and tedious as their tale;
To friendship dead, though not untaught to feel
When Self and Church demand a bigot zeal.
With eager haste they court the lord of power,
Whether 'tis Pitt or Petty rules the hour;†
To him, with suppliant smiles, they bend the head,
While distant mitres to their eyes are spread.
But should a storm o'erwhelm him with disgrace,
They'd fly to seek the next who fill'd his place.
Such are the men who learning's treasures guard!
Such is their practice, such is their reward!
This much, at least, we may presume to say—
The premium can't exceed the price they pay.

TO A BEAUTIFUL QUAKER.

SWEET girl! though only once we met,
That meeting I shall ne'er forget;
And though we ne'er may meet again,
Remembrance will thy form retain.
I would not say, "I love," but still
My senses struggle with my will:

* Porson, Greek professor of Trinity College, Cambridge; a man whose powers of mind and writings may, perhaps, justify their preference.

† Since this was written, Lord Henry Petty has lost his place, and subsequently (I had almost said consequently) the honor of representing the University. A fact so glaring requires no comment.

In vain, to drive thee from my breast,
My thoughts are more and more repress;
In vain I check the rising sighs,
Another to the last replies:
Perhaps this is not love, but yet
Our meeting I can ne'er forget.

What though we never silence broke,
Our eyes a sweeter language spoke;
The tongue in flattering falsehood deals,
And tells a tale it never feels:
Deceit the guilty lips impart,
And hush the mandates of the heart;
But soul's interpreters, the eyes,
Spurn such restraint, and scorn disguise.
As thus our glances oft conversed,
And all our bosoms felt rehearsed,
No spirit, from within, reproved us,
Say rather, "'twas the spirit moved us."
Though what they utter'd I repress,
Yet I conceive thou'lt partly guess;
For as on thee my memory ponders,
Perchance to me thine also wanders.
This for myself, at least, I'll say,
Thy form appears through night, through day:
Awake, with it my fancy teems;
In sleep, it smiles in fleeting dreams:
The vision charms the hours away,
And bids me curse Aurora's ray,
For breaking slumbers of delight,
Which make me wish for endless night.
Since, oh! whate'er my future fate,
Shall joy or woe my steps await,
Tempted by love, by storms beset,
Thine image I can ne'er forget.

Alas! again no more we meet,
No more our former looks repeat;
Then let me breathe this parting prayer,
The dictate of my bosom's care:
"May Heaven so guard my lovely Quaker,
That anguish never can o'ertake her;
That peace and virtue ne'er forsake her;
But bliss be aye her heart's partaker:
Oh! may the happy mortal, fated
To be, by dearest ties, related,
For her each hour new joys discover,
And lose the husband in the lover!
May that fair bosom never know
What 'tis to feel the restless woe,
Which stings the soul with vain regret
Of him who never can forget!"

1806.

THE CORNELIAN.

No specious splendor of this stone
Endears it to my memory ever;
With lustre only once it shone,
And blushes modest as the giver.

Some, who can sneer at friendship's ties,
Have for my weakness oft reproved me;
Yet still the simple gift I prize—
For I am sure the giver loved me.

He offer'd it with downcast look,
As fearful that I might refuse it;
I told him when the gift I took,
My only fear should be to lose it.

This pledge attentively I view'd,
And sparkling as I held it near,
Methought one drop the stone bedew'd,
And ever since I've loved a tear.

Still, to adorn his humble youth,
Nor wealth, nor birth their treasures yield;
But he who seeks the flowers of truth
Must quit the garden for the field.

'Tis not the plant uprear'd in sloth,
Which beauty shows, and sheds perfume;
The flowers which yield the most of both
In Nature's wild luxuriance bloom.

Had Fortune aided Nature's care,
For once forgetting to be blind,
His would have been an ample share,
If well proportion'd to his mind.

But had the goddess clearly seen,
His form had fix'd her fickle breast;
Her countless hoards would his have been,
And none remain'd to give thee rest.

AN OCCASIONAL PROLOGUE,

DELIVERED PREVIOUS TO THE PERFORMANCE OF "THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE" AT A PRIVATE THEATRE.

SINCE the refinement of this polish'd age
Has swept immoral raillery from the stage;
Since taste has now expunged licentious wit,
Which stamp'd disgrace on all an author writ;
Since now to please with purer scenes we seek,
Nor dare to call the blush from Beauty's cheek,
Oh! let the modest Muse some pity claim,
And meet indulgence, though she find not fame.
Still, not for her alone we wish respect,
Others appear more conscious of defect:
To-night no veteran Roscii you behold,
In all the arts of scenic action old;

No Cooke, no Kemble, can salute you here,
No Siddons draw the sympathetic tear;
To-night you throng to witness the *début*
Of embryo actors, to the Drama new:
Here, then, our almost unfledged wings we try;
Clip not our pinions ere the birds can fly:
Failing in this our first attempt to soar,
Drooping, alas! we fall to rise no more.
Not one poor trembler only fear betrays,
Who hopes, yet almost dreads, to meet your praise;
But all our *dramatis personæ* wait
In fond suspense this crisis of their fate.
No venal views our progress can retard,
Your generous plaudits are our sole reward:
For these, each Hero all his power displays,
Each timid Heroine shrinks before your gaze.
Surely the last will some protection find;
None to the softer sex can prove unkind:
While Youth and Beauty form the female shield,
The sternest censor to the fair must yield.
Yet, should our feeble efforts nought avail,
Should, after all, our best endeavors fail,
Still let some mercy in your bosoms live,
And, if you can't applaud, at least forgive.

ON THE DEATH OF MR. FOX,

THE FOLLOWING ILLIBERAL IMPROMPTU APPEARED IN A MORNING PAPER.

"Our nation's foes lament on Fox's death,
But bless the hour when Pitt resign'd his breath:
These feelings wide, let sense and truth unclue,
We give the palm where Justice points it 's due."

TO WHICH THE AUTHOR OF THESE PIECES SENT THE FOLLOWING REPLY.

O FACTIOUS viper! whose envenom'd tooth
Would mangle still the dead, perverting truth;
What though our "nation's foes" lament the fate,
With generous feeling, of the good and great,
Shall dastard tongues essay to blast the name
Of him whose meed exists in endless fame?
When Pitt expired in plenitude of power,
Though ill success obscured his dying hour,
Pity her dewy wings before him spread,
For noble spirits "war not with the dead."
His friends, in tears, a last sad requiem gave,
As all his errors slumber'd in the grave;
He sunk, an Atlas bending 'neath the weight
Of cares o'erwhelming our conflicting state:
When, lo! a Hercules in Fox appear'd,
Who for a time the ruin'd fabric rear'd;
He, too, is fall'n, who Britain's loss supplied,
With him our fast-reviving hopes have died;
Not one great people only raise his urn,

All Europe's far-extending regions mourn.
"These feelings wide, let sense and truth unclue,
To give the palm where Justice points it's due:"
Yet let not canker'd Calumny assail,
Or round our statesmen wind her gloomy veil.
Fox! o'er whose corse a mourning world must weep,
Whose dear remains in honor'd marble sleep;
For whom, at last, e'en hostile nations groan,
While friends and foes alike his talents own;
Fox shall in Britain's future annals shine,
Nor e'en to Pitt the patriot's palm resign;
Which Envy, wearing Candor's sacred mask,
For Pitt, and Pitt alone, has dared to ask.

THE TEAR.

"O lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros
Ducentium ortus ex animo; quater
Felix! in imo qui scatentem
Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit."—GRAY.

WHEN Friendship or Love our sympathies move,
When Truth in a glance should appear,
The lips may beguile with a dimple or smile,
But the test of affection 's a Tear.

Too oft is a smile but the hypocrite's wile,
To mask detestation or fear;
Give me the soft sigh, whilst the soul-telling eye
Is dimm'd for a time with a Tear.

Mild Charity's glow, to us mortals below,
Shows the soul from barbarity clear;
Compassion will melt where this virtue is felt,
And its dew is diffused in a Tear.

The man doom'd to sail with the blast of the gale,
Through billows Atlantic to steer,
As he bends o'er the wave which may soon be his grave,
The green sparkles bright with a Tear.

The soldier braves death for a fanciful wreath
In Glory's romantic career:
But he raises the foe when in battle laid low,
And bathes every wound with a Tear.

If with high-bounding pride he return to his bride,
Renouncing the gore-crimson'd spear,
All his toils are repaid, when, embracing the maid,
From her eyelid he kisses the Tear.

Sweet scene of my youth! seat of Friendship and Truth,*
Where love chased each fast-fleeting year,
Loth to leave thee, I mourn'd, for a last look I turn'd,
But thy spire was scarce seen through a Tear.

* Harrow.

Though my vows I can pour to my Mary no more,
My Mary to love once so dear;
In the shade of her bower I remember the hour
She rewarded those vows with a Tear.

By another possest, may she live ever blest!
Her name still my heart must revere:
With a sigh I resign what I once thought was mine,
And forgive her deceit with a Tear.

Ye friends of my heart, ere from you I depart,
This hope to my breast is most near:
If again we shall meet in this rural retreat,
May we meet, as we part, with a Tear.

When my soul wings her flight to the regions of night,
And my corse shall recline on its bier,
As ye pass by the tomb where my ashes consume,
Oh! moisten their dust with a Tear.

May no marble bestow the splendor of woe
Which the children of vanity rear;
No fiction of fame shall blazon my name;
All I ask—all I wish—is a Tear.

October 26, 1806.

REPLY TO SOME VERSES

OF J. M. B. PIGOT, ESQ., ON THE CRUELTY OF HIS MISTRESS.

Why, Pigot, complain of this damsel's disdain,
Why thus in despair do you fret?
For months you may try, yet, believe me, a sigh
Will never obtain a coquette.

Would you teach her to love? for a time seem to rove:
At first she may frown in a pet;
But leave her awhile, she shortly will smile,
And then you may kiss your coquette.

For such are the airs of these fanciful fairs,
They think all our homage a debt:
Yet a partial neglect soon takes an effect,
And humbles the proudest coquette.

Dissemble your pain, and lengthen your chain,
And seem her hauteur to regret;
If again you shall sigh, she no more will deny
That yours is the rosy coquette.

If still, from false pride, your pangs she deride,
This whimsical virgin forget;
Some other admire, who will melt with your fire,
And laugh at the little coquette.

For me, I adore some twenty or more,
And love them most dearly; but yet,
Though my heart they enthrall, I'd abandon them all,
Did they act like your blooming coquette.

No longer repine, adopt this design,
And break through her slight-woven net;
Away with despair, no longer forbear
To fly from the captious coquette.

Then quit her, my friend! your bosom defend,
Ere quite with her snares you're beset:
Lest your deep-wounded heart, when incensed by the smart,
Should lead you to curse the coquette.

October 27, 1806.

TO THE SIGHING STREPHON.

Your pardon, my friend, if my rhymes did offend,
Your pardon a thousand times o'er;
From friendship I strove your pangs to remove,
But I swear I will do so no more.

Since your beautiful maid your flame has repaid,
No more I your folly regret;
She 's now most divine, and I bow at the shrine
Of this quickly reformed coquette.

Yet still I must own, I should never have known
From your verses, what else she deserved;
Your pain seem'd so great, I pitied your fate,
As your fair was so devilish reserved.

Since the balm-breathing kiss of this magical miss
Can such wonderful transports produce;
Since the "world you forgot, when your lips once have met,"
My counsel will get but abuse.

You say, when "I rove, I know nothing of love;"
'Tis true, I am given to range:
If I rightly remember, I've loved a good number,
Yet there 's pleasure, at least, in a change.

I will not advance, by the rules of romance,
To humor a whimsical fair;
Though a smile may delight, yet a frown won't affright,
Or drive me to dreadful despair.

While my blood is thus warm, I ne'er shall reform,
To mix in the Platonists' school;
Of this I am sure, were my passion so pure,
Thy mistress would think me a fool.

And if I should shun every woman for one,
Whose image must fill my whole breast—
Whom I must prefer, and sigh but for her—
What an insult 'twould be to the rest!

Now, Strephon, good-bye; I cannot deny
Your passion appears most absurd;
Such love as you plead is pure love indeed,
For it only consists in the word.

TO ELIZA.

ELIZA, what fools are the Mussulman sect,
Who to woman deny the soul's future existence;
Could they see thee, Eliza, they'd own their defect,
And this doctrine would meet with a general resistance.

Had their prophet possess'd half an atom of sense,
He ne'er would have women from paradise driven;
Instead of his houris, a flimsy pretence,
With women alone he had peopled his heaven.

Yet still, to increase your calamities more,
Not content with depriving your bodies of spirit,
He allots one poor husband to share amongst four!—
With souls you'd dispense; but this last who could bear it?

His religion to please neither party is made;
On husbands 'tis hard, to the wives most uncivil;
Still I can't contradict, what so oft has been said,
"Though women are angels, yet wedlock 's the devil."

LACHIN Y GAIR.*

AWAY, ye gay landscapes, ye gardens of roses!
In you let the minions of luxury rove;
Restore me the rocks, where the snowflake reposes,
Though still they are sacred to freedom and love:
Yet, Caledonia, beloved are thy mountains,
Round their white summits though elements war;
Though cataracts foam 'stead of smooth-flowing fountains,
I sigh for the valley of dark Loch na Garr.

Ah! there my young footsteps in infancy wander'd:
My cap was the bonnet, my cloak was the plaid;†
On chieftains long perish'd my memory ponder'd,
As daily I strode through the pine-cover'd glade.
I sought not my home till the day's dying glory
Gave place to the rays of the bright polar star;
For fancy was cheer'd by traditional story,
Disclosed by the natives of dark Loch na Garr.

"Shades of the dead! have I not heard your voices
Rise on the night-rolling breath of the gale?"
Surely the soul of the hero rejoices,
And rides on the wind o'er his own Highland vale.
Round Loch na Garr while the stormy mist gathers,
Winter presides in his cold icy car:
Clouds there encircle the forms of my fathers;
They dwell in the tempests of dark Loch na Garr.

* *Lachin y Gair*, or, as it is pronounced in the Erse, *Loch na Garr*, towers proudly pre-eminent in the Northern Highlands, near Invercauld. One of our modern tourists mentions it as the highest mountain, perhaps, in Great Britain. Be this as it may, it is certainly one of the most sublime and picturesque amongst our "Caledonian Alps." Its appearance is of a dusky hue, but the summit is the seat of eternal snows. Near Lachin y Gair I spent some of the early part of my life, the recollection of which has given birth to these stanzas.

† This word is erroneously pronounced *plad*: the proper pronunciation (according to the Scotch) is shown by the orthography.

"Ill-starr'd, though brave, did no visions forebode *
Tell you that fate had forsaken your cause?"
Ah! were you destined to die at Culloden,†
Victory crown'd not your fall with applause:
Still were you happy in death's earthy slumber,
You rest with your clan in the caves of Braemar;‡
The pibroch resounds, to the piper's loud number,
Your deeds on the echoes of dark Loch na Garr.

Years have roll'd on, Loch na Garr, since I left you,
Years must elapse ere I tread you again;
Nature of verdure and flowers has bereft you,
Yet still are you dearer than Albion's plain.
England! thy beauties are tame and domestic
To one who has roved o'er the mountains afar:
Oh for the crags that are wild and majestic,
The steep frowning glories of dark Loch na Garr!

TO ROMANCE.

Parent of golden dreams, Romance!
Auspicious queen of childish joys,
Who lead'st along, in airy dance,
Thy votive train of girls and boys;
At length, in spells no longer bound,
I break the fetters of my youth;
No more I tread thy mystic round,
But leave thy realms for those of Truth.

And yet 'tis hard to quit the dreams
Which haunt the unsuspicious soul,
Where every nymph a goddess seems,
Whose eyes through rays immortal roll;
While Fancy holds her boundless reign,
And all assume a varied hue;
When virgins seem no longer vain,
And even woman's smiles are true.

And must we own thee but a name,
And from thy hall of clouds descend?
Nor find a sylph in every dame,
A Pylades in every friend? §

* I allude here to my maternal ancestors, "the *Gordons*," many of whom fought for the unfortunate Prince Charles, better known by the name of the Pretender. This branch was nearly allied by blood, as well as attachment, to the Stuarts. George, the second Earl of Huntly, married the Princess Annabella Stuart, daughter of James the First of Scotland. By her he left four sons: the third, Sir William Gordon, I have the honor to claim as one of my progenitors.

† Whether any perished in the battle of Culloden, I am not certain; but, as many fell in the insurrection, I have used the name of the principal action, "*pars pro toto*."

‡ A tract of the Highlands, so called. There is also a Castle of Braemar.

§ It is hardly necessary to add, that Pylades was the companion of Orestes, and a partner in one of those friendships which, with those of Achilles and Patroclus, Nisus and Euryalus, Damon and Pythias, have been handed down to posterity as remarkable instances of attachments, which in all probability never existed beyond the imagination of the poet, or the page of an historian, or modern novelist.

But leave at once thy realms of air
To mingling bands of fairy elves;
Confess that woman 's false as fair,
And friends have feeling for—themselves!

With shame I own I've felt thy sway;
Repentant, now thy reign is o'er:
No more thy precepts I obey,
No more on fancied pinions soar.
Fond fool! to love a sparkling eye,
And think that eye to truth was dear;
To trust a passing wanton's sigh,
And melt beneath a wanton's tear!

Romance! disgusted with deceit,
Far from thy motley court I fly,
Where Affectation holds her seat,
And sickly Sensibility:
Whose silly tears can never flow
For any pangs excepting thine;
Who turns aside from real woe,
To steep in dew thy gaudy shrine.

Now join with sable Sympathy,
With cypress crown'd, array'd in weeds,
Who heaves with thee her simple sigh,
Whose breast for every bosom bleeds;
And call thy sylvan female choir,
To mourn a swain for ever gone,
Who once could glow with equal fire,
But bends not now before thy throne.

Ye genial nymphs, whose ready tears
On all occasions swiftly flow;
Whose bosoms heave with fancied fears,
With fancied flames and frenzy glow;
Say, will you mourn my absent name,
Apostate from your gentle train?
An infant bard at least may claim
From you a sympathetic strain.

Adieu, fond race! a long adieu!
The hour of fate is hovering nigh;
Even now the gulf appears in view,
Where unlamented you must lie:
Oblivion's blackening lake is seen,
Convulsed by gales you cannot weather;
Where you, and eke your gentle queen,
Alas! must perish altogether.

ANSWER TO SOME ELEGANT VERSES

SENT BY A FRIEND TO THE AUTHOR, COMPLAINING THAT ONE OF HIS DESCRIPTIONS WAS RATHER TOO WARMLY DRAWN.

> "But if any old lady, knight, priest, or physician,
> Should condemn me for printing a second edition;
> If good Madame Squintum my work should abuse,
> May I venture to give her a smack of my muse!"
>
> *New Bath Guide.*

CANDOR compels me, Becher! to commend
The verse which blends the censor with the friend.
Your strong yet just reproof extorts applause
From me, the heedless and imprudent cause.
For this wild error, which pervades my strain,
I sue for pardon—must I sue in vain?
The wise sometimes from Wisdom's ways depart:
Can youth then hush the dictates of the heart?
Precepts of prudence curb, but can't control,
The fierce emotions of the flowing soul;
When Love's delirium haunts the glowing mind,
Limping Decorum lingers far behind:
Vainly the dotard mends her prudish pace,
Outstript and vanquish'd in the mental chase.
The young, the old, have worn the chains of love:
Let those they ne'er confined my lay reprove:
Let those whose souls contemn the pleasing power
Their censures on the hapless victim shower.

Oh! how I hate the nerveless, frigid song,
The ceaseless echo of the rhyming throng,
Whose labor'd lines in chilling numbers flow,
To paint a pang the author ne'er can know!
The artless Helicon I boast is youth;—
My lyre, the heart; my muse, the simple truth.
Far be't from me the "virgin's mind" to "taint:"
Seduction's dread is here no slight restraint.
The maid whose virgin breast is void of guile,
Whose wishes dimple in a modest smile,
Whose downcast eye disdains the wanton leer,
Firm in her virtue's strength, yet not severe—
She whom a conscious grace shall thus refine,
Will ne'er be "tainted" by a strain of mine.
But for the nymph whose premature desires
Torment her bosom with unholy fires,
No net to snare her willing heart is spread;
She would have fallen, though she ne'er had read.
For me, I fain would please the chosen few,
Whose souls, to feeling and to nature true,
Will spare the childish verse, and not destroy
The light effusions of a heedless boy.
I seek not glory from the senseless crowd;
Of fancied laurels I shall ne'er be proud:
Their warmest plaudits I would scarcely prize,
Their sneers or censures I alike despise.

November 26, 1806.

ELEGY ON NEWSTEAD ABBEY.*

"It is the voice of years that are gone! they roll before me with all their deeds."—OSSIAN.

NEWSTEAD! fast-falling, once resplendent dome!
Religion's shrine! repentant Henry's pride! †
Of warriors, monks, and dames the cloister'd tomb,
Whose pensive shades around thy ruins glide,

Hail to thy pile! more honor'd in thy fall,
Than modern mansions in their pillar'd state;
Proudly majestic frowns thy vaulted hall,
Scowling defiance on the blasts of fate.

No mail-clad serfs, ‡ obedient to their lord,
In grim array the crimson cross demand; §
Or gay assemble round the festive board
Their chief's retainers, an immortal band:

Else might inspiring Fancy's magic eye
Retrace their progress through the lapse of time,
Marking each ardent youth, ordain'd to die,
A votive pilgrim in Judea's clime.

But not from thee, dark pile! departs the chief;
His feudal realm in other regions lay:
In thee the wounded conscience courts relief,
Retiring from the garish blaze of day.

Yes! in thy gloomy cells and shades profound,
The monk abjured a world he ne'er could view;
Or blood-stain'd guilt repenting solace found,
Or innocence from stern oppression flew.

A monarch bade thee from that wild arise,
Where Sherwood's outlaws once were wont to prowl;
And Superstition's crimes, of various dyes,
Sought shelter in the priest's protecting cowl.

Where now the grass exhales a murky dew,
The humid pall of life-extinguish'd clay,
In sainted fame the sacred fathers grew,
Nor raised their pious voices but to pray;

Where now the bats their wavering wings extend,
Soon as the gloaming ‖ spreads her waning shade,
The choir did oft their mingling vespers blend,
Or matin orisons to Mary paid.¶

* As one poem on this subject is already printed, the author had, originally, no intention of inserting this piece. It is now added at the particular request of some friends.

† Henry II. founded Newstead soon after the murder of Thomas a' Becket.

‡ This word is used by Walter Scott, in his poem, "The Wild Huntsman," synonymous with vassal.

§ The red cross was the badge of the crusaders.

‖ As "gloaming," the Scottish word for twilight, is far more poetical, and has been recommended by many eminent literary men, particularly by Dr. Moore in his Letters to Burns, I have ventured to use it on account of its harmony.

¶ The priory was dedicated to the Virgin.

Years roll on years; to ages, ages yield;
Abbots to abbots, in a line, succeed;
Religion's charter their protecting shield,
Till royal sacrilege their doom decreed.

One holy Henry rear'd the Gothic walls,
And bade the pious inmates rest in peace;
Another Henry the kind gift recalls,*
And bids devotion's hallow'd echoes cease.

Vain is each threat or supplicating prayer;
He drives them exiles from their blest abode,
To roam a dreary world in deep despair—
No friend, no home, no refuge but their God.

Hark how the hall, resounding to the strain,
Shakes with the martial music's novel din!
The heralds of a warrior's haughty reign,
High crested banners wave thy walls within.

Of changing sentinels the distant hum,
The mirth of feasts, the clang of burnish'd arms,
The braying trumpet and the hoarser drum,
Unite in concert with increased alarms.

An abbey once, a regal fortress now,
Encircled by insulting rebel powers,
War's dread machines o'erhang thy threatening brow,
And dart destruction in sulphureous showers.

Ah, vain defence! the hostile traitor's siege,
Though oft repulsed, by guile o'ercomes the brave;
His thronging foes oppress the faithful liege,
Rebellion's recking standards o'er him wave.

Not unavenged the raging baron yields;
The blood of traitors smears the purple plain;
Unconquer'd still, his falchion there he wields,
And days of glory yet for him remain.

Still in that hour the warrior wish'd to strew
Self-gather'd laurels on a self-sought grave:
But Charles' protecting genius hither flew,
The monarch's friend, the monarch's hope, to save.

Trembling, she snatch'd him from the unequal strife,†
In other fields the torrent to repel;
For nobler combats, here, reserved his life,
To lead the band where godlike Falkland fell.‡

* At the dissolution of the monasteries, Henry VIII. bestowed Newstead Abbey on Sir John Byron.

† Lord Byron, and his brother Sir William, held high commands in the royal army. The former was general in chief in Ireland, lieutenant of the Tower, and governor to James, Duke of York, afterwards the unhappy James II.; the latter had a principal share in many actions.

‡ Lucius Cary, Lord Viscount Falkland, the most accomplished man of his age, was killed at the battle of Newbury, charging in the ranks of Lord Byron's regiment of cavalry.

From thee, poor pile! to lawless plunder given,
While dying groans their painful requiem sound,
Far different incense now ascends to heaven,
Such victims wallow on the gory ground.

There many a pale and ruthless robber's corse,
Noisome and ghast, defiles thy sacred sod;
O'er mingling man, and horse commix'd with horse,
Corruption's heap, the savage spoilers trod.

Graves, long with rank and sighing weeds o'erspread,
Ransack'd, resign perforce their mortal mould;
From ruffian fangs escape not e'en the dead,
Raked from repose in search for buried gold.

Hush'd is the harp, unstrung the warlike lyre,
The minstrel's palsied hand reclines in death:
No more he strikes the quivering chords with fire,
Or sings the glories of the martial wreath.

At length the sated murderers, gorged with prey,
Retire; the clamor of the fight is o'er;
Silence again resumes her awful sway,
And sable Horror guards the massy door.

Here Desolation holds her dreary court:
What satellites declare her dismal reign!
Shrieking their dirge, ill-omen'd birds resort,
To flit their vigils in the hoary fane.

Soon a new morn's restoring beams dispel
The clouds of anarchy from Britain's skies;
The fierce usurper seeks his native hell,
And Nature triumphs as the tyrant dies.

With storms she welcomes his expiring groans;
Whirlwinds, responsive, greet his laboring breath;
Earth shudders as her caves receive his bones,
Loathing the offering of so dark a death.*

The legal ruler now resumes the helm,†
He guides through gentle seas the prow of state;
Hope cheers, with wonted smiles, the peaceful realm,
And heals the bleeding wounds of wearied hate.

The gloomy tenants, Newstead! of thy cells,
Howling, resign their violated nest;
Again the master on his tenure dwells,
Enjoy'd, from absence, with enraptured zest.

Vassals, within thy hospitable pale,
Loudly carousing, bless their lord's return;
Culture again adorns the gladdening vale,
And matrons, once lamenting, cease to mourn.

* This is an historical fact. A violent tempest occurred immediately subsequent to the death or interment of Cromwell, which occasioned many disputes between his partisans and the Cavaliers; both interpreted the circumstance into divine interposition; but whether as approbation or condemnation, we leave for the casuists of that age to decide. I have made such use of the occurrence as suited the subject of my poem.

† Charles II.

A thousand songs on tuneful echo float,
Unwonted foliage mantles o'er the trees:
And hark! the horns proclaim a mellow note,
The hunter's cry hangs lengthening on the breeze.

Beneath their coursers' hoofs the valleys shake:
What fears, what anxious hopes, attend the chase!
The dying stag seeks refuge in the Lake;
Exulting shouts announce the finish'd race.

Ah, happy days! too happy to endure!
Such simple sports our plain forefathers knew:
No splendid vices glitter'd to allure:
Their joys were many, as their cares were few.

From these descending, sons to sires succeed;
Time steals along, and Death uprears his dart;
Another chief impels the foaming steed,
Another crowd pursue the panting hart.

Newstead! what saddening change of scene is thine!
Thy yawning arch betokens slow decay!
The last and youngest of a noble line
Now holds thy mouldering turrets in his sway.

Deserted now, he scans thy gray worn towers;
Thy vaults, where dead of feudal ages sleep;
Thy cloisters, pervious to the wintry showers;
These, these he views, and views them but to weep.

Yet are his tears no emblem of regret:
Cherish'd affection only bids them flow.
Pride, hope, and love forbid him to forget,
But warm his bosom with impassion'd glow.

Yet he prefers thee to the gilded domes
Or gewgaw grottos of the vainly great;
Yet lingers 'mid thy damp and mossy tombs,
Nor breathes a murmur 'gainst the will of fate.

Haply thy sun, emerging, yet may shine,
Thee to irradiate with meridian ray;
Hours splendid as the past may still be thine,
And bless thy future as thy former day.

CHILDISH RECOLLECTIONS.

"I cannot but remember such things were,
And were most dear to me."

WHEN slow Disease, with all her host of pains,
Chills the warm tide which flows along the veins;
When Health, affrighted, spreads her rosy wing,
And flies with every changing gale of spring;
Not to the aching frame alone confined,
Unyielding pangs assail the drooping mind:
What grisly forms, the spectre-train of woe,
Bid shuddering Nature shrink beneath the blow,
With Resignation wage relentless strife,
While Hope retires appall'd, and clings to life.

Yet less the pang when, through the tedious hour,
Remembrance sheds around her genial power,
Calls back the vanish'd days to rapture given,
When love was bliss, and beauty form'd our heaven;
Or, dear to youth, portrays each childish scene.
Those fairy bowers, where all in turn have been.
As when through clouds that pour the summer storm
The orb of day unveils his distant form,
Gilds with faint beams the crystal dews of rain,
And dimly twinkles o'er the watery plain;
Thus, while the future dark and cheerless gleams,
The sun of memory, glowing through my dreams,
Though sunk the radiance of his former blaze,
To scenes far distant points his paler rays:
Still rules my senses with unbounded sway,
The past confounding with the present day.

Oft does my heart indulge the rising thought,
Which still recurs, unlook'd for and unsought:
My soul to Fancy's fond suggestion yields,
And roams romantic o'er her airy fields:
Scenes of my youth, developed, crowd to view,
To which I long have bade a last adieu!
Seats of delight, inspiring youthful themes;
Friends lost to me for aye, except in dreams;
Some who in marble prematurely sleep,
Whose forms I now remember but to weep;
Some who yet urge the same scholastic course
Of early science, future fame the source;
Who, still contending in the studious race,
In quick rotation fill the senior place.
These with a thousand visions now unite,
To dazzle, though they please, my aching sight.
Ida! blest spot, where Science holds her reign,
How joyous once I join'd thy youthful train!
Bright in idea gleams thy lofty spire,
Again I mingle with thy playful choir;
Our tricks of mischief, every childish game,
Unchanged by time or distance, seem the same;
Through winding paths along the glade, I trace
The social smile of every welcome face;
My wonted haunts, my scenes of joy and woe,
Each early boyish friend, or youthful foe,
Our feuds dissolved, but not my friendship past:—
I bless the former, and forgive the last.
Hours of my youth! when, nurtured in my breast,
To love a stranger, friendship made me blest;—
Friendship, the dear peculiar bond of youth,
When every artless bosom throbs with truth;
Untaught by worldly wisdom how to feign,
And check each impulse with prudential rein;
When all we feel, our honest souls disclose—
In love to friends, in open hate to foes;
No varnish'd tales the lips of youth repeat,
No dear-bought knowledge purchased by deceit.

Hypocrisy, the gift of lengthen'd years,
Matured by age, the garb of prudence wears.
When now the boy is ripen'd into man,
His careful sire chalks forth some wary plan;
Instructs his son from candor's path to shrink,
Smoothly to speak, and cautiously to think;
Still to assent, and never to deny—
A patron's praise can well reward the lie:
And who, when Fortune's warning voice is heard,
Would lose his opening prospects for a word?
Although against that word his heart rebel,
And truth indignant all his bosom swell.

Away with themes like this! not mine the task
From flattering fiends to tear the hateful mask;
Let keener bards delight in satire's sting;
My fancy soars not on Detraction's wing:
Once, and but once, she aim'd a deadly blow,
To hurl defiance on a secret foe;
But when that foe, from feeling or from shame,
The cause unknown, yet still to me the same,
Warn'd by some friendly hint, perchance, retired,
With this submission all her rage expired.
From dreaded pangs that feeble foe to save,
She hush'd her young resentment, and forgave;
Or, if my muse a pedant's portrait drew,
Pomposus' virtues are but known to few:
I never fear'd the young usurper's nod,
And he who wields must sometimes feel the rod.
If since on Granta's failings, known to all
Who share the converse of a college hall,
She sometimes trifled in a lighter strain,
'Tis past, and thus she will not sin again,
Soon must her early song for ever cease,
And all may rail when I shall rest in peace.

Here first remember'd be the joyous band,
Who hail'd me chief, obedient to command:
Who join'd with me in every boyish sport—
Their first adviser, and their last resort;
Nor shrunk beneath the upstart pedant's frown,
Or all the sable glories of his gown;
Who, thus transplanted from his father's school—
Unfit to govern, ignorant of rule—
Succeeded him, whom all unite to praise,
The dear preceptor of my early days:
Probus, the pride of science, and the boast,*
To Ida now, alas! for ever lost.

* Dr. Drury. This most able and excellent man retired from his situation in March, 1805, after having resided thirty-five years at Harrow: the last twenty as head-master; an office he held with equal honor to himself and advantage to the very extensive school over which he presided. Panegyric would here be superfluous: it would be useless to enumerate qualifications which were never doubted. A considerable contest took place between three rival candidates for his vacant chair: of this I can only say,

Si mea cum vestris valuissent vota Pelasgi!
Non foret ambiguus tanti certaminis hæres.

With him, for years, we search'd the classic page,
And fear'd the master, though we loved the sage:
Retired at last, his small yet peaceful seat,
From learning's labor is the blest retreat.
Pomposus fills his magisterial chair;
Pomposus governs—but, my muse, forbear:
Contempt, in silence, be the pedant's lot;
His name and precepts be alike forgot!
No more his mention shall my verse degrade—
To him my tribute is already paid.

High, through those elms, with hoary branches crown'd,
Fair Ida's bower adorns the landscape round;
There Science, from her favor'd seat, surveys
The vale where rural Nature claims her praise;
To her awhile resigns her youthful train,
Who move in joy, and dance along the plain;
In scatter'd groups, each favor'd haunt pursue;
Repeat old pastimes, and discover new;
Flush'd with his rays, beneath the noontide sun,
In rival bands, between the wickets run,
Drive o'er the sward the ball with active force,
Or chase with nimble feet its rapid course.
But these with slower steps direct their way,
Where Brent's cool waves in limpid currents stray;
While yonder few search out some green retreat,
And arbors shade them from the summer heat:
Others again, a pert and lively crew,
Some rough and thoughtless stranger placed in view,
With frolic quaint their antic jests expose,
And tease the grumbling rustic as he goes:
Nor rest with this, but many a passing fray
Tradition treasures for a future day:
"'Twas here the gather'd swains for vengeance fought,
And here we earn'd the conquest dearly bought;
Here have we fled before superior might,
And here renew'd the wild tumultuous fight."
While thus our souls with early passions swell,
In lingering tones resounds the distant bell;
Th' allotted hour of daily sport is o'er,
And Learning beckons from her temple's door.
No splendid tablets grace her simple hall,
But ruder records fill the dusky wall;
There, deeply carved, behold! each tyro's name
Secures its owner's academic fame;
Here mingling view the names of sire and son,
The one long graved, the other just begun:
These shall survive alike when son and sire
Beneath one common stroke of fate expire:
Perhaps their last memorial these alone,
Denied in death a monumental stone,
Whilst to the gale in mournful cadence wave
The sighing weeds that hide their nameless grave.
And here my name, and many an early friend's,
Along the wall in lengthen'd line extends.
Though still our deeds amuse the youthful race,

Who tread our steps, and fill our former place,
Who young obey'd their lords in silent awe,
Whose nod commanded, and whose voice was law;
And now, in turn, possess the reins of power,
To rule the little tyrants of an hour;—
Though sometimes, with the tales of ancient day,
They pass the dreary winter's eve away—
"And thus our former rulers stemm'd the tide,
And thus they dealt the combat side by side;
Just in this place the mouldering walls they scaled,
Nor bolts nor bars against their strength avail'd;
Here Probus came, the rising fray to quell,
And here he falter'd forth his last farewell;
And here one night abroad they dared to roam,
While bold Pomposus bravely stay'd at home;"—
While thus they speak, the hour must soon arrive,
When names of these, like ours, alone survive:
Yet a few years, one general wreck will whelm
The faint remembrance of our fairy realm.

Dear honest race! though now we meet no more,
One last long look on what we were before—
Our first kind greetings, and our last adieu—
Drew tears from eyes unused to weep with you.
Through splendid circles, fashion's gaudy world,
Where folly's glaring standard waves unfurl'd,
I plunged to drown in noise my fond regret,
And all I sought or hoped was to forget.
Vain wish! if chance some well-remember'd face,
Some old companion of my early race,
Advanced to claim his friend with honest joy,
My eyes, my heart, proclaim'd me still a boy;
The glittering scene, the flattering groups around,
Were quite forgotten when my friend was found;
The smiles of beauty—(for, alas! I've known
What 'tis to bend before Love's mighty throne)—
The smiles of beauty, though those smiles were dear,
Could hardly charm me, when that friend was near:
My thoughts bewilder'd in the fond surprise,
The wood of Ida danced before my eyes;
I saw the sprightly wanderers pour along,
I saw and join'd again the joyous throng;
Panting, again I traced her lofty grove,
And friendship's feelings triumph'd over love.

Yet, why should I alone with such delight,
Retrace the circuit of my former flight?
Is there no cause beyond the common claim
Endear'd to all in childhood's very name?
Ah! sure some stronger impulse vibrates here,
Which whispers friendship will be doubly dear,
To one who thus for kindred hearts must roam,
And seek abroad the love denied at home.
Those hearts, dear Ida, have I found in thee—
A home, a world, a paradise to me.
Stern Death forbade my orphan youth to share

The tender guidance of a father's care.
Can rank, or e'en a guardian's name, supply
The love which glistens in a father's eye?
For this can wealth or title's sound atone,
Made, by a parent's early loss, my own?
What brother springs a brother's love to seek?
What sister's gentle kiss has prest my cheek?
For me how dull the vacant moments rise,
To no fond bosom link'd by kindred ties!
Oft in the progress of some fleeting dream
Fraternal smiles collected round me seem;
While still the visions to my heart are prest,
The voice of love will murmur in my rest:
I hear—I wake—and in the sound rejoice;
I hear again—but ah! no brother's voice.
A hermit, 'midst of crowds, I fain must stray
Alone, though thousand pilgrims fill the way;
While these a thousand kindred wreaths entwine,
I cannot call one single blossom mine:
What then remains? in solitude to groan,
To mix in friendship, or to sigh alone.
Thus must I cling to some endearing hand,
And none more dear than Ida's social band.

Alonzo! best and dearest of my friends,
Thy name ennobles him who thus commends:
From this fond tribute thou canst gain no praise;
The praise is his who now that tribute pays.
Oh! in the promise of thy early youth,
If hope anticipate the words of truth,
Some loftier bard shall sing thy glorious name,
To build his own upon thy deathless fame.
Friend of my heart, and foremost of the list
Of those with whom I lived supremely blest,
Oft have we drain'd the font of ancient lore;
Though drinking deeply, thirsting still the more.
Yet, when confinement's lingering hour was done,
Our sports, our studies, and our souls were one:
Together we impell'd the flying ball;
Together waited in our tutor's hall:
Together join'd in cricket's manly toil,
Or shared the produce of the river's spoil;
Or, plunging from the green declining shore,
Our pliant limbs the buoyant billows bore;
In every element, unchanged, the same,
All, all that brothers should be, but the name.

Nor yet are you forgot, my jocund boy;
Davus, the harbinger of childish joy;
For ever foremost in the ranks of fun,
The laughing herald of the harmless pun;
Yet with a breast of such materials made—
Anxious to please, of pleasing half afraid;
Candid and liberal, with a heart of steel
In danger's path, though not untaught to feel.
Still I remember, in the factious strife,
The rustic's musket aim'd against my life:

High poised in air the massy weapon hung,
A cry of horror burst from every tongue;
Whilst I, in combat with another foe,
Fought on, unconscious of th' impending blow;
Your arm, brave boy, arrested his career—
Forward you sprung, insensible to fear;
Disarm'd and baffled by your conquering hand,
The grovelling savage roll'd upon the sand:
An act like this, can simple thanks repay,
Or all the labors of a grateful lay?
Oh, no! whene'er my breast forgets the deed,
That instant, Davus, it deserves to bleed.

Lycus! on me thy claims are justly great:
Thy milder virtues could my muse relate,
To thee alone, unrivall'd, would belong
The feeble efforts of my lengthen'd song.
Well canst thou boast, to lead in senates fit,
A Spartan firmness with Athenian wit:
Though yet in embryo these perfections shine,
Lycus! thy father's fame will soon be thine.
Where learning nurtures the superior mind,
What may we hope from genius thus refined!
When time at length matures thy growing years,
How wilt thou tower above thy fellow-peers!
Prudence and sense, a spirit bold and free,
With honor's soul, united beam in thee.

Shall fair Euryalus pass by unsung?
From ancient lineage, not unworthy sprung:
What though one sad dissension bade us part,
That name is yet embalm'd within my heart;
Yet at the mention does that heart rebound,
And palpitate, responsive to the sound.
Envy dissolved our ties, and not our will:
We once were friends—I'll think we are so still.
A form unmatch'd in nature's partial mould,
A heart untainted, we in thee behold:
Yet not the senate's thunder thou shalt wield,
Nor seek for glory in the tented field;
To minds of ruder texture these be given—
Thy soul shall nearer soar its native heaven.
Haply, in polish'd courts might be thy seat,
But that thy tongue could never forge deceit:
The courtier's supple bow and sneering smile,
The flow of compliment, the slippery wile,
Would make that breast with indignation burn,
And all the glittering snares to tempt thee spurn.
Domestic happiness will stamp thy fate;
Sacred to love, unclouded e'er by hate;
The world admire thee, and thy friends adore;—
Ambition's slave alone would toil for more.

Now last, but nearest, of the social band,
See honest, open, generous Cleon stand;
With scarce one speck to cloud the pleasing scene,
No vice degrades that purest soul serene.

On the same day our studious race begun,
On the same day our studious race was run;
Thus side by side we pass'd our first career,
Thus side by side we strove for many a year;
At last concluded our scholastic life,
We neither conquer'd in the classic strife:
As speakers each supports an equal name,*
And crowds allow to both a partial fame:
To soothe a youthful rival's early pride,
Though Cleon's candor would the palm divide,
Yet candor's self compels me now to own,
Justice awards it to my friend alone.

Oh! friends regretted, scenes for ever dear,
Remembrance hails you with her warmest tear!
Drooping, she bends o'er pensive Fancy's urn,
To trace the hours which never can return;
Yet with the retrospection loves to dwell,
And soothe the sorrows of her last farewell!
Yet greets the triumph of my boyish mind,
As infant laurels round my head were twined,
When Probus' praise repaid my lyric song,
Or placed me higher in the studious throng;
Or when my first harangue received applause,
His sage instruction the primeval cause,
What gratitude to him my soul possest,
While hope of dawning honors fill'd my breast!
For all my humble fame, to him alone
The praise is due, who made that fame my own.
Oh! could I soar above these feeble lays,
These young effusions of my early days,
To him my muse her noblest strain would give:
The song might perish, but the theme might live.
Yet why for him the needless verse essay?
His honor'd name requires no vain display:
By every son of grateful Ida blest,
It finds an echo in each youthful breast;
A fame beyond the glories of the proud,
Or all the plaudits of the venal crowd.

Ida! not yet exhausted is the theme,
Nor closed the progress of my youthful dream.
How many a friend deserves the grateful strain!
What scenes of childhood still unsung remain!
Yet let me hush this echo of the past,
This parting song, the dearest and the last;
And brood in secret o'er those hours of joy,
To me a silent and a sweet employ,
While, future hope and fear alike unknown,
I think with pleasure on the past alone;
Yes, to the past alone my heart confine,
And chase the phantom of what once was mine.

Ida! still o'er thy hills in joy preside,
And proudly steer through time's eventful tide;

* This alludes to the public speeches delivered at the school where the author was educated.

Still may thy blooming sons thy name revere,
Smile in thy bower, but quit thee with a tear;—
That tear, perhaps, the fondest which will flow,
O'er their last scene of happiness below.
Tell me, ye hoary few, who glide along,
The feeble veterans of some former throng,
Whose friends, like autumn leaves by tempests whirl'd,
Are swept for ever from this busy world;
Revolve the fleeting moments of your youth,
While Care as yet withheld her venom'd tooth;
Say if remembrance days like this endears
Beyond the rapture of succeeding years?
Say, can ambition's fever'd dream bestow
So sweet a balm to soothe your hours of woe?
Can treasures, hoarded for some thankless son,
Can royal smiles, or wreaths by slaughter won,
Can stars or ermine, man's maturer toys,
(For glittering baubles are not left to boys,)
Recall one scene so much beloved to view,
As those where Youth her garland twined for you?
Ah, no! amidst the gloomy calm of age
You turn with faltering hand life's varied page;
Peruse the record of your days on earth,
Unsullied only where it marks your birth;
Still lingering pause above each chequer'd leaf,
And blot with tears the sable lines of grief;
Where Passion o'er the theme her mantle threw,
Or weeping Virtue sigh'd a faint adieu;
But bless the scroll which fairer words adorn,
Traced by the rosy finger of the morn;
When Friendship bow'd before the shrine of truth,
And Love, without his pinion, smiled on youth.*

ANSWER TO A BEAUTIFUL POEM,

ENTITLED "THE COMMON LOT."†

MONTGOMERY! true, the common lot
Of mortals lies in Lethe's wave;
Yet some shall never be forgot—
Some shall exist beyond the grave.

"Unknown the region of his birth,"
The hero rolls the tide of war;‡
Yet not unknown his martial worth,
Which glares a meteor from afar.

* L'Amitié est l'Amour sans ailes," is a French proverb.

† Written by James Montgomery, author of "The Wanderer in Switzerland," &c.

‡ No particular hero is here alluded to. The exploits of Bayard, Nemours, Edward the Black Prince, and in more modern times the fame of Marlborough, Frederick the Great, Count Saxe, Charles of Sweden, &c., are familiar to every historical reader, but the exact places of their birth are known to a very small proportion of their admirers.

His joy or grief, his weal or woe,
Perchance may 'scape the page of fame;
Yet nations now unborn will know
The record of his deathless name.

The patriot's and the poet's frame
Must share the common tomb of all:
Their glory will not sleep the same;
That will arise, though empires fall.

The lustre of a beauty's eye
Assumes the ghastly stare of death;
The fair, the brave, the good must die,
And sink the yawning grave beneath.

Once more the speaking eye revives,
Still beaming through the lover's strain:
For Petrarch's Laura still survives:
She died, but ne'er will die again.

The rolling seasons pass away,
And Time, untiring, waves his wing;
Whilst honor's laurels ne'er decay,
But bloom in fresh, unfading spring.

All, all must sleep in grim repose,
Collected in the silent tomb;
The old and young, with friends and foes,
Festering alike in shrouds, consume.

The mouldering marble lasts its day,
Yet falls at length a useless fane;
To ruin's ruthless fangs a prey,
The wrecks of pillar'd pride remain.

What, though the sculpture be destroy'd,
From dark oblivion meant to guard;
A bright renown shall be enjoy'd
By those whose virtues claim reward.

Then do not say the common lot
Of all lies deep in Lethe's wave;
Some few who ne'er will be forgot
Shall burst the bondage of the grave.

1806.

LINES

ADDRESSED TO THE REV. J. T. BECHER, ON HIS ADVISING THE AUTHOR TO MIX MORE WITH SOCIETY.

Dear Becher, you tell me to mix with mankind:—
I cannot deny such a precept is wise;
But retirement accords with the tone of my mind:
I will not descend to a world I despise.

Did the senate or camp my exertions require,
Ambition might prompt me, at once, to go forth,
When infancy's years of probation expire,
Perchance I may strive to distinguish my birth.

The fire in the cavern of Etna conceal'd,
Still mantles unseen in its secret recess;—
At length, in a volume terrific reveal'd,
No torrent can quench it, no bounds can repress.

Oh! thus, the desire in my bosom for fame
Bids me live but to hope for posterity's praise.
Could I soar with the phœnix on pinions of flame,
With him I would wish to expire in the blaze.

For the life of a Fox, of a Chatham the death,
What censure, what danger, what woe would I brave!
Their lives did not end when they yielded their breath!
Their glory illumines the gloom of their grave.

Yet why should I mingle in Fashion's full herd?
Why crouch to her leaders, or cringe to her rules?
Why bend to the proud, or applaud the absurd?
Why search for delight in the friendship of fools?

I have tasted the sweets and the bitters of love;
In friendship I early was taught to believe:
My passion the matrons of prudence reprove;
I have found that a friend may profess, yet deceive.

To me what is wealth?—it may pass in an hour,
If tyrants prevail, or if Fortune should frown;
To me what is title?—the phantom of power;
To me what is fashion?—I seek but renown.

Deceit is a stranger as yet to my soul;
I still am unpractised to varnish the truth:
Then why should I live in a hateful control?
Why waste upon folly the days of my youth?

1806.

THE DEATH OF CALMAR AND ORLA.

AN IMITATION OF MACPHERSON'S OSSIAN.*

DEAR are the days of youth! Age dwells on their remembrance through the mist of time. In the twilight he recalls the sunny hours of morn. He lifts his spear with trembling hand. "Not thus feebly did I raise the steel before my fathers!" Past is the race of heroes! But their fame rises on the harp; their souls ride on the wings of the wind; they hear the sound through the sighs of the storm, and rejoice in their hall of clouds! Such is Calmar. The gray stone marks his narrow house. He looks down from eddying tempests: he rolls his form in the whirlwind, and hovers on the blast of the mountain.

In Morven dwelt the chief; a beam of war to Fingal. His steps in the field were marked in blood. Lochlin's sons had fled before his angry spear; but mild was the eye of Calmar; soft was the flow of his yellow locks, they streamed like the meteor of the night. No maid was the sigh of his soul: his thoughts were given to friendship,—to dark-haired Orla, destroyer of heroes! Equal were their swords in

* It may be necessary to observe that the story, though considerably varied in the catastrophe, is taken from "Nisus and Euryalus," of which episode a translation is already given in the present volume.

battle; but fierce was the pride of Orla:—gentle alone to Calmar. Together they dwelt in the cave of Oithona.

From Lochlin, Swaran bounded o'er the blue waves. Erin's sons fell beneath his might. Fingal roused his chiefs to combat. Their ships cover the ocean. Their hosts throng on the green hills. They come to the aid of Erin.

Night rose in clouds. Darkness veils the armies: but the blazing oaks gleam through the valley. The sons of Lochlin slept: their dreams were of blood. They lift the spear in thought, and Fingal flies. Not so the host of Morven. To watch was the post of Orla. Calmar stood by his side. Their spears were in their hands. Fingal called his chiefs: they stood around. The king was in the midst. Gray were his locks, but strong was the arm of the king. Age withered not his powers. "Sons of Morven," said the hero, "to-morrow we meet the foe. But where is Cuthullin, the shield of Erin? He rests in the halls of Tura; he knows not of our coming. Who will speed through Lochlin to the hero, and call the chief to arms? The path is by the swords of foes; but many are my heroes. They are thunderbolts of war. Speak, ye chiefs! Who will arise?"

"Son of Trenmor! mine be the deed," said dark-haired Orla, "and mine alone. What is death to me? I love the sleep of the mighty, but little is the danger. The sons of Lochlin dream. I will seek carborne Cuthullin. If I fall, raise the song of bards; and lay me by the stream of Lubar."—"And shalt thou fall alone?" said fair-haired Calmar. "Wilt thou leave thy friend afar? Chief of Oithona! not feeble is my arm in fight. Could I see thee die, and not lift the spear? No, Orla! ours has been the chase of the roebuck, and the feast of shells; ours be the path of danger: ours has been the cave of Oithona; ours be the narrow dwelling on the banks of Lubar." "Calmar," said the chief of Oithona, "why should thy yellow locks be darkened in the dust of Erin? Let me fall alone. My father dwells in his hall of air: he will rejoice in his boy; but the blue-eyed Mora spreads the feast for her son in Morven. She listens to the steps of the hunter on the heath, and thinks it is the tread of Calmar. Let him not say, 'Calmar has fallen by the steel of Lochlin: he died with gloomy Orla, the chief of the dark brow.' Why should tears dim the azure eye of Mora? Why should her voice curse Orla, the destroyer of Calmar? Live, Calmar! Live to raise my stone of moss; live to revenge me in the blood of Lochlin. Join the song of bards above my grave. Sweet will be the song of death to Orla, from the voice of Calmar. My ghost shall smile on the notes of praise." "Orla," said the son of Mora, "could I raise the song of death to my friend? Could I give his fame to the winds? No, my heart would speak in sighs: faint and broken are the sounds of sorrow. Orla! our souls shall hear the song together. One cloud shall be ours on high: the bards will mingle the names of Orla and Calmar."

They quit the circle of the chiefs. Their steps are to the host of Lochlin. The dying blaze of oak dim twinkles through the night. The northern star points the path to Tura. Swaran, the king, rests on his lonely hill. Here the troops are mixed: they frown in sleep; their shields beneath their heads. Their swords gleam at distance in heaps. The fires are faint; their embers fail in smoke. All is hush'd; but the gale sighs on the rocks above. Lightly wheel the heroes through the slumbering band. Half the journey is past, when Mathon, resting on his shield, meets the eye of Orla. It rolls in flame, and glistens through the shade. His spear is raised on high. "Why

dost thou bend thy brow, chief of Oithona?" said fair-haired Calmar: "we are in the midst of foes. Is this a time for delay?" "It is a time for vengeance," said Orla of the gloomy brow. "Mathon of Lochlin sleeps: seest thou his spear? Its point is dim with the gore of my father. The blood of Mathon shall reek on mine: but shall I slay him sleeping, son of Mora? No! he shall feel his wound: my fame shall not soar on the blood of slumber. Rise, Mathon, rise! The son of Conna calls; thy life is his; rise to combat." Mathon starts from sleep; but did he rise alone? No; the gathering chiefs bound on the plain. "Fly! Calmar, fly!" said dark-haired Orla. "Mathon is mine: I shall die in joy: but Lochlin crowds around. Fly through the shade of night." Orla turns. The helm of Mathon is cleft: his shield falls from his arm: he shudders in his blood. He rolls by the side of the blazing oak. Strumon sees him fall: his wrath rises: his weapon glitters on the head of Orla: but a spear pierced his eye. His brain gushes through the wound, and foams on the spear of Calmar. As roll the waves of the Ocean on two mighty barks of the north, so pour the men of Lochlin on the chiefs. As, breaking the surge in foam, proudly steer the barks of the north, so rise the chiefs of Morven on the scattered crests of Lochlin. The din of arms came to the ear of Fingal. He strikes his shield; his sons throng around; the people pour along the heath. Ryno bounds in joy. Ossian stalks in his arms. Oscar shakes the spear. The eagle wing of Fillan floats on the wind. Dreadful is the clang of death! Many are the widows of Lochlin! Morven prevails in its strength.

Morn glimmers on the hills: no living foe is seen; but the sleepers are many; grim they lie on Erin. The breeze of ocean lifts their locks; yet they do not awake. The hawks scream above their prey.

Whose yellow locks wave o'er the breast of a chief? Bright as the gold of the stranger, they mingle with the dark hair of his friend. 'Tis Calmar: he lies on the bosom of Orla. Theirs is one stream of blood. Fierce is the look of the gloomy Orla. He breathes not; but his eye is still a flame. It glares in death unclosed. His hand is grasped in Calmar's; but Calmar lives! he lives, though low. "Rise," said the king, "rise, son of Mora: 'tis mine to heal the wounds of heroes. Calmar may yet bound on the hills of Morven."

"Never more shall Calmar chase the deer of Morven with Orla," said the hero. "What were the chase to me alone? Who should share the spoils of battle with Calmar? Orla is at rest! Rough was thy soul, Orla! yet soft to me as the dew of morn. It glared on others in lightning: to me a silver beam of night. Bear my sword to blue-eyed Mora; let it hang in my empty hall. It is not pure from blood: but it could not save Orla. Lay me with my friend. Raise the song when I am dark!"

They are laid by the stream of Lubar. Four gray stones mark the dwelling of Orla and Calmar. When Swaran was bound, our sails rose on the blue waves. The winds gave our barks to Morven:—the bards raised the song.

"What form rises on the roar of clouds? Whose dark ghost gleams on the red streams of tempests? His voice rolls on the thunder. 'Tis Orla, the brown chief of Oithona. He was unmatched in war. Peace to thy soul, Orla! thy fame will not perish. Nor thine, Calmar! Lovely wast thou, son of blue-eyed Mora; but not harm-

less was thy sword. It hangs in thy cave. The ghosts of Lochlin shriek around its steel. Hear thy praise, Calmar! It dwells on the voice of the mighty. Thy name shakes on the echoes of Morven. Then raise thy fair locks, son of Mora. Spread them on the arch of the rainbow; and smile through the tears of the storm." *

TO EDWARD NOEL LONG, ESQ.

"Nil ego contulerim jocundo sanus amico."—HORACE.

DEAR Long, in this sequester'd scene,
While all around in slumber lie,
The joyous days which ours have been
Come rolling fresh on Fancy's eye;
Thus if amidst the gathering storm,
While clouds the darken'd noon deform,
Yon heaven assumes a varied glow,
I hail the sky's celestial bow,
Which spreads the sign of future peace,
And bids the war of tempests cease.
Ah! though the present brings but pain,
I think those days may come again;
Or if, in melancholy mood,
Some lurking envious fear intrude,
To check my bosom's fondest thought,
And interrupt the golden dream,
I crush the fiend with malice fraught,
And still indulge my wonted theme.
Although we ne'er again can trace,
In Granta's vale, the pedant's lore;
Nor through the groves of Ida chase
Our raptured visions as before,
Though Youth has flown on rosy pinion,
And Manhood claims his stern dominion—
Age will not every hope destroy,
But yield some hours of sober joy.

Yes, I will hope that Time's broad wing
Will shed around some dews of spring:
But if his scythe must sweep the flowers
Which bloom among the fairy bowers,
Where smiling Youth delights to dwell,
And hearts with early rapture swell;
If frowning Age, with cold control,
Confines the current of the soul,
Congeals the tear of pity's eye,
Or checks the sympathetic sigh,
Or hears unmoved misfortune's groan,
And bids me feel for self alone;
Oh, may my bosom never learn

* I fear Laing's late edition has completely overthrown every hope that Macpherson's Ossian might prove the translation of a series of poems complete in themselves; but, while the imposture is discovered, the merit of the work remains undisputed, though not without faults—particularly, in some parts, turgid and bombastic diction. The present humble imitation will be pardoned by the admirers of the original as an attempt, however inferior, which evinces an attachment to their favorite author.

To soothe its wonted heedless flow;
Still, still despise the censor stern,
But ne'er forget another's woe.
Yes, as you knew me in the days
O'er which Remembrance yet delays,
Still may I rove, untutor'd, wild,
And even in age at heart a child.

Though now on airy visions borne,
To you my soul is still the same.
Oft has it been my fate to mourn,
And all my former joys are tame.
But, hence! ye hours of sable hue!
Your frowns are gone, my sorrows o'er!
By every bliss my childhood knew,
I'll think upon your shade no more.
Thus, when the whirlwind's rage is past,
And caves their sullen roar enclose,
We heed no more the wintry blast,
When lull'd by zephyr to repose.

Full often has my infant Muse
Attuned to love her languid lyre;
But now, without a theme to choose,
The strains in stolen sighs expire.
My youthful nymphs, alas! are flown:
E—— is a wife, and C—— a mother,
And Carolina sighs alone,
And Mary 's given to another;
And Cora's eye, which roll'd on me,
Can now no more my love recall:
In truth, dear Long, 'twas time to flee;
For Cora's eye will shine on all.
And though the sun, with genial rays,
His beam alike to all displays,
And every lady's eye 's a *sun*,
These last should be confined to one.
The soul's meridian don't become her,
Whose sun displays a general *summer!*
Thus faint is every former flame,
And passion's self is now a name.
As, when the ebbing flames are low,
The aid which once improved their light,
And bade them burn with fiercer glow,
Now quenches all their sparks in night;
Thus has it been with passion's fires,
As many a boy and girl remembers,
While all the force of love expires,
Extinguish'd with the dying embers.

But now, dear Long, 'tis midnight's noon,
And clouds obscure the watery moon,
Whose beauties I shall not rehearse,
Described in every stripling's verse;
For why should I the path go o'er
Which every bard has trod before?
Yet ere yon silver lamp of night

Has thrice perform'd her stated round,
Has thrice retraced her path of light,
And chased away the gloom profound,
I trust that we, my gentle friend,
Shall see her rolling orbit wend
Above the dear-loved peaceful seat
Which once contain'd our youth's retreat;
And then with those our childhood knew,
We'll mingle in the festive crew;
While many a tale of former day
Shall wing the laughing hours away;
And all the flow of soul shall pour
The sacred intellectual shower,
Nor cease till Luna's waning horn
Scarce glimmers through the mist of morn.

TO A LADY.

Oh! had my fate been join'd with thine,
As once this pledge appear'd a token,
These follies had not then been mine,
For then my peace had not been broken.

To thee these early faults I owe,
To thee, the wise and old reproving:
They know my sins, but do not know
'Twas thine to break the bonds of loving.

For once my soul, like thine, was pure,
And all its rising fires could smother;
But now thy vows no more endure,
Bestow'd by thee upon another.

Perhaps his peace I could destroy,
And spoil the blisses that await him;
Yet let my rival smile in joy,
For thy dear sake I cannot hate him.

Ah! since thy angel form is gone,
My heart no more can rest with any;
But what it sought in thee alone,
Attempts, alas! to find in many.

Then fare thee well, deceitful maid!
'Twere vain and fruitless to regret thee;
Nor Hope, nor Memory yield their aid,
But Pride may teach me to forget thee.

Yet all this giddy waste of years,
This tiresome round of palling pleasures;
These varied loves, these matrons' fears,
These thoughtless strains to passion's measures—

If thou wert mine, had all been hush'd:—
This cheek, now pale from early riot,
With passion's hectic ne'er had flush'd,
But bloom'd in calm domestic quiet.

Yes, once the rural scene was sweet,
For Nature seem'd to smile before thee;
And once my breast abhorr'd deceit—
For then it beat but to adore thee.

But now I seek for other joys:
To think would drive my soul to madness;
In thoughtless throngs and empty noise,
I conquer half my bosom's sadness.

Yet, even in these a thought will steal,
In spite of every vain endeavor—
And fiends might pity what I feel—
To know that thou art lost for ever.

I WOULD I WERE A CARELESS CHILD.

I WOULD I were a careless child,
Still dwelling in my Highland cave,
Or roaming through the dusky wild,
Or bounding o'er the dark blue wave;
The cumbrous pomp of Saxon pride*
Accords not with the free-born soul,
Which loves the mountain's craggy side,
And seeks the rocks where billows roll.

Fortune! take back these cultured lands,
Take back this name of splendid sound!
I hate the touch of servile hands,
I hate the slaves that cringe around.
Place me along the rocks I love,
Which sound to Ocean's wildest roar:
I ask but this—again to rove
Through scenes my youth had known before.

Few are my years, and yet I feel
The world was ne'er design'd for me:
Ah! why do darkening shades conceal
The hour when man must cease to be?
Once I beheld a splendid dream,
A visionary scene of bliss!
Truth!—wherefore did thy hated beam
Awake me to a world like this?

I loved—but those I loved are gone;
Had friends—my early friends are fled:
How cheerless feels the heart alone
When all its former hopes are dead!
Though gay companions o'er the bowl
Dispel awhile the sense of ill;
Though pleasure stirs the maddening soul,
The heart—the heart—is lonely still.

How dull! to hear the voice of those
Whom rank or chance, whom wealth or power,
Have made, though neither friends nor foes,
Associates of the festive hour.

* Sassenach, or Saxon, a Gaelic word, signifying either Lowland or English.

Give me again a faithful few,
In years and feelings still the same,
And I will fly the midnight crew,
Where boisterous joy is but a name.

And woman, lovely woman! thou,
My hope, my comforter, my all!
How cold must be my bosom now,
When e'en thy smiles begin to pall!
Without a sigh would I resign
This busy scene of splendid woe,
To make that calm contentment mine,
Which virtue knows, or seems to know.

Fain would I fly the haunts of men—
I seek to shun, not hate mankind;
My breast requires the sullen glen,
Whose gloom may suit a darken'd mind.
Oh that to me the wings were given
Which bear the turtle to her nest!
Then would I cleave the vault of heaven,
To flee away, and be at rest.*

WHEN I ROVED A YOUNG HIGHLANDER.

When I roved a young Highlander o'er the dark heath,
And climb'd thy steep summit, O Morven of snow! †
To gaze on the torrent that thunder'd beneath,
Or the mist of the tempest that gather'd below,‡
Untutor'd by science, a stranger to fear,
And rude as the rocks where my infancy grew,
No feeling, save one, to my bosom was dear;
Need I say, my sweet Mary, 'twas centred in you?

Yet it could not be love, for I knew not the name—
What passion can dwell in the heart of a child?
But still I perceive an emotion the same
As I felt, when a boy, on the crag-cover'd wild:
One image alone on my bosom impress'd,
I loved my bleak regions, nor panted for new;
And few were my wants, for my wishes were bless'd;
And pure were my thoughts, for my soul was with you.

I arose with the dawn; with my dog as my guide,
From mountain to mountain I bounded along;
I breasted the billows of Dee's rushing tide,§
And heard at a distance the Highlander's song:

* "And I said, O that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest."—*Psalm* iv. 6. This verse also constitutes a part of the most beautiful anthem in our language.

† Morven, a lofty mountain in Aberdeenshire. "Gormal of snow," is an expression frequently to be found in Ossian.

‡ This will not appear extraordinary to those who have been accustomed to the mountains. It is by no means uncommon, on attaining the top of Ben-e-vis, Ben-y-bourd, &c., to perceive, between the summit and the valley, clouds pouring down rain, and occasionally accompanied by lightning, while the spectator literally looks down upon the storm, perfectly secure from its effects.

§ "Breasting the lofty surge."—SHAKSPEARE. The Dee is a beautiful river, which rises near Mar Lodge, and falls into the sea at New Aberdeen.

At eve, on my heath-cover'd couch of repose,
No dreams, save of Mary, were spread to my view;
And warm to the skies my devotions arose,
For the first of my prayers was a blessing on you.

I left my bleak home, and my visions are gone;
The mountains are vanish'd, my youth is no more;
As the last of my race, I must wither alone,
And delight but in days I have witness'd before:
Ah! splendor has raised, but embitter'd my lot;
More dear were the scenes which my infancy knew;
Though my hopes may have fail'd, yet they are not forgot;
Though cold is my heart, still it lingers with you.

When I see some dark hill point its crest to the sky,
I think of the rocks that o'ershadow Colbleen;*
When I see the soft blue of a love-speaking eye,
I think of those eyes that endear'd the rude scene;
When, haply, some light-waving locks I behold,
That faintly resemble my Mary's in hue,
I think on the long flowing ringlets of gold,
The locks that were sacred to beauty, and you.

Yet the day may arrive when the mountains once more
Shall rise to my sight in their mantles of snow;
But while these soar above me, unchanged as before,
Will Mary be there to receive me? Ah, no!
Adieu, then, ye hills, where my childhood was bred!
Thou sweet-flowing Dee, to thy waters adieu!
No home in the forest shall shelter my head —
Ah! Mary, what home could be mine but with you?

TO GEORGE, EARL DELAWARR.

Oh! yes, I will own we were dear to each other;
The friendships of childhood, though fleeting, are true;
The love which you felt was the love of a brother,
Nor less the affection I cherish'd for you.

But Friendship can vary her gentle dominion;
The attachment of years in a moment expires;
Like Love, too, she moves on a swift-waving pinion,
But glows not, like Love, with unquenchable fires.

Full oft have we wander'd through Ida together,
And blest were the scenes of our youth, I allow:
In the spring of our life, how serene is the weather!
But winter's rude tempests are gathering now.

No more with affection shall memory blending,
The wonted delights of our childhood retrace:
When pride steels the bosom, the heart is unbending,
And what would be justice appears a disgrace.

* Colbleen is a mountain near the verge of the Highlands, not far from the ruins of Dee Castle.

However, dear George, for I still must esteem you—
The few whom I love I can never upbraid—
The chance which has lost may in future redeem you,
Repentance will cancel the vow you have made.

I will not complain, and though chill'd is affection,
With me no corroding resentment shall live:
My bosom is calm'd by the simple reflection,
That both may be wrong, and that both should forgive.

You knew that my soul, that my heart, my existence,
If danger demanded, were wholly your own;
You knew me unalter'd by years or by distance,
Devoted to love and to friendship alone.

You knew—but away with the vain retrospection!
The bond of affection no longer endures;
Too late you may droop o'er the fond recollection,
And sigh for the friend who was formerly yours.

For the present, we part—I will hope not for ever;
For time and regret will restore you at last.
To forget our dissension we both should endeavor,
I ask no atonement, but days like the past.

TO THE EARL OF CLARE.

"Tu semper amoris
Sis memor, et cari comitis ne abscedat imago."
VAL. FLAC.

FRIEND of my youth! when young we roved,
Like striplings, mutually beloved,
With friendship's purest glow,
The bliss which wing'd those rosy hours
Was such as pleasure seldom showers
On mortals here below.

The recollection seems alone
Dearer than all the joys I've known,
When distant far from you:
Though pain, 'tis still a pleasing pain,
To trace those days and hours again,
And sigh again, adieu!

My pensive memory lingers o'er
Those scenes to be enjoy'd no more,
Those scenes regretted ever;
The measure of our youth is full,
Life's evening dream is dark and dull,
And we may meet—ah! never!

As when one parent spring supplies
Two streams which from one fountain rise,
Together join'd in vain;
How soon, diverging from their source,
Each, murmuring, seeks another course
Till mingled in the main!

Our vital streams of weal or woe,
Though near, alas! distinctly flow,
Nor mingle as before:
Now swift or slow, now black or clear,
'Till death's unfathom'd gulf appear,
And both shall quit the shore.

Our souls, my friend! which once supplied
One wish, nor breathed a thought beside,
Now flow in different channels:
Disdaining humbler rural sports,
'Tis yours to mix in polish'd courts,
And shine in fashion's annals;

'Tis mine to waste on love my time,
Or vent my reveries in rhyme,
Without the aid of reason;
For sense and reason (critics know it)
Have quitted every amorous poet,
Nor left a thought to seize on.

Poor Little! sweet, melodious bard!
Of late esteem'd it monstrous hard,
That he, who sang before all—
He who the lore of love expanded—
By dire reviewers should be branded,
As void of wit and moral.*

And yet, while Beauty's praise is thine,
Harmonious favorite of the Nine!
Repine not at thy lot.
Thy soothing lays may still be read,
When Persecution's arm is dead,
And critics are forgot.

Still I must yield those worthies merit,
Who chasten, with unsparing spirit,
Bad rhymes, and those who write them;
And though myself may be the next
By critic sarcasm to be vext,
I really will not fight them.†

Perhaps they would do quite as well
To break the rudely sounding shell
Of such a young beginner.
He who offends at pert nineteen,
Ere thirty may become, I ween,
A very harden'd sinner.

Now, Clare, I must return to you;
And, sure, apologies are due:
Accept, then, my concession.

* These stanzas were written soon after the appearance of a severe critique in a northern review, on a new publication of the British Anacreon.

† A bard (*horresco referens*) defied his reviewer to mortal combat. If this example becomes prevalent, our periodical censors must be dipped in the river Styx; for what else can secure them from the numerous host of their enraged assailants?

In truth, dear Clare, in fancy's flight
I soar along from left to right!
My muse admires digression.

I think I said 'twould be your fate
To add one star to royal state;—
May regal smiles attend you!
And should a noble monarch reign,
You will not seek his smiles in vain,
If worth can recommend you.

Yet since in danger courts abound,
Where specious rivals glitter round,
From snares may saints preserve you;
And grant your love or friendship ne'er
From any claim a kindred care,
But those who best deserve you!

Not for a moment may you stray
From truth's secure, unerring way!
May no delights decoy!
O'er roses may your footsteps move,
Your smiles be ever smiles of love,
Your tears be tears of joy!

Oh! if you wish that happiness
Your coming days and years may bless,
And virtues crown your brow;
Be still as you were wont to be,
Spotless as you've been known to me—
Be still as you are now.

And though some trifling share of praise,
To cheer my last declining days,
To me were doubly dear;
Whilst blessing your beloved name,
I'd waive at once a *poet's* fame,
To prove a *prophet* here.

LINES WRITTEN BENEATH AN ELM IN THE CHURCH-YARD OF HARROW.

Spot of my youth! whose hoary branches sigh,
Swept by the breeze that fans thy cloudless sky;
Where now alone I muse, who oft have trod,
With those I loved, thy soft and verdant sod;
With those who, scatter'd far, perchance deplore,
Like me, the happy scenes they knew before:
Oh! as I trace again thy winding hill,
Mine eyes admire, my heart adores thee still,
Thou drooping Elm! beneath whose boughs I lay,
And frequent mused the twilight hours away;
Where, as they once were wont, my limbs recline,
But ah! without the thoughts which then were mine:
How do thy branches, moaning to the blast,
Invite the bosom to recall the past,

And seem to whisper, as they gently swell,
"Take, while thou canst, a lingering, last farewell!"

When fate shall chill, at length, this fever'd breast,
And calm its cares and passions into rest,
Oft have I thought, 'twould soothe my dying hour—
If aught may soothe when life resigns her power—
To know some humbler grave, some narrow cell,
Would hide my bosom where it loved to dwell.
With this fond dream, methinks, 'twere sweet to die—
And here it linger'd, here my heart might lie;
Here might I sleep where all my hopes arose;
Scene of my youth, and couch of my repose;
For ever stretch'd beneath this mantling shade,
Press'd by the turf where once my childhood play'd,
Wrapt by the soil that veils the spot I loved,
Mix'd with the earth o'er which my footsteps moved:
Blest by the tongues that charm'd my youthful ear,
Mourn'd by the few my soul acknowledged here;
Deplored by those in early days allied,
And unremember'd by the world beside.

September 2, 1807.

ENGLISH BARDS

AND

SCOTCH REVIEWERS:

A SATIRE.

"I had rather be a kitten, and cry mew!
Than one of these same metre ballad-mongers."

SHAKSPEARE.

"Such shameless bards we have; and yet 'tis true,
There are as mad, abandon'd critics too."

POPE.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

All my friends, learned and unlearned, have urged me not to publish the Satire with my name. If I were to be "turn'd from the career of my humor by quibbles quick, and paper bullets of the brain," I should have complied with their counsel; but I am not to be terrified by abuse, or bullied by reviewers, with or without arms. I can safely say that I have attacked none *personally* who did not commence on the offensive. An author's works are public property: he who purchases may judge, and publish his opinion if he pleases; and the authors I have endeavored to commemorate may do by me as I have done by them: I dare say they will succeed better in condemning my scribblings than in mending their own. But my object is not to prove that I can write well, but, *if possible*, to make others write better.

As the poem has met with far more success than I expected, I have endeavored in this edition to make some additions and alterations, to render it more worthy of public perusal.

In the First Edition of this Satire, published anonymously, fourteen lines on the subject of Bowles's Pope were written by, and inserted at the request of, an ingenious friend of mine, who has now in the press a volume of poetry. In the present edition they are erased, and some of my own substituted in their stead; my only reason for this being that which I conceive would operate with any other person in the same manner—a determination not to publish with my name any production which was not entirely and exclusively my own composition.

With regard to the real talents of many of the poetical persons whose performances are mentioned, or alluded to, in the following pages, it is presumed by the author that there can be little difference of opinion in the public at large; though, like other sectaries, each has his separate tabernacle of proselytes, by whom his abilities are overrated, his faults overlooked, and his metrical canons received without scruple and without consideration. But the unquestionable possession of considerable genius by several of the writers here censured, renders their mental prostitution more to be regretted. Imbecility may be pitied, or, at the worst, laughed at and forgotten: perverted powers demand the most decided reprehension. No one can wish more than the author, that some known and able writer had undertaken their exposure; but Mr. Gifford has devoted himself to Massinger, and in the absence of the regular physician, a country practitioner may, in cases of absolute necessity, be allowed to prescribe his nostrum to prevent the extension of so deplorable an epidemic, provided there be no quackery in his treatment of the malady. A caustic is here offered, as it is to be feared nothing short of actual cautery can recover the numerous patients afflicted with the present provalent and distressing *rabies* for rhyming.

As to the Edinburgh Reviewers, it would indeed require a Hercules to crush the Hydra; but if the author succeeds in merely "bruising one of the heads of the serpent," though his own hand should suffer in the encounter, he will be amply satisfied.

ENGLISH BARDS AND SCOTCH REVIEWERS.

STILL must I hear?—shall hoarse Fitzgerald bawl *
His creaking couplets in a tavern hall,
And I not sing, lest, haply, Scotch reviews
Should dub me scribbler, and denounce my muse?
Prepare for rhyme—I'll publish, right or wrong;
Fools are my theme, let satire be my song.

Oh! nature's noblest gift—my gray goose-quill!
Slave of my thoughts, obedient to my will,
Torn from thy parent bird to form a pen,
That mighty instrument of little men!
The pen! foredoom'd to aid the mental throes
Of brains that labor, big with verse or prose,
Though nymphs forsake, and critics may deride,
The lover's solace, and the author's pride.
What wits, what poets, dost thou daily raise!
How frequent is thy use, how small thy praise!
Condemn'd at length to be forgotten quite,
With all the pages which 'twas thine to write.
But thou, at least, mine own especial pen!
Once laid aside, but now assumed again,
Our task complete, like Hamet's shall be free;†
Though spurn'd by others, yet beloved by me:
Then let us soar to-day; no common theme,
No Eastern vision, no distemper'd dream
Inspires—our path, though full of thorns, is plain;
Smooth be the verse, and easy be the strain.

When Vice triumphant holds her sovereign sway,
And men through life her willing slaves obey;

* IMITATION:

"Semper ego auditor tantum? nunquamne reponam,
Vexatus toties rauci Theseide Codri?"

JUVENAL, *Satire* 1.

Mr. Fitzgerald, facetiously termed by Cobbett the "Small Beer Poet," inflicts his annual tribute of verse on the "Literary Fund;" not content with writing, he spouts in person, after the company have imbibed a reasonable quantity of bad port, to enable them to sustain the operation.

† Cid Hamet Benengeli promises repose to his pen, in the last chapter of "Don Quixote." Oh that our voluminous gentry would follow the example of Cid Hamet Benengeli!

When Folly, frequent harbinger of crime,
Unfolds her motley store to suit the time;
When knaves and fools combined o'er all prevail,
When justice halts, and right begins to fail;
E'en then the boldest start from public sneers,
Afraid of shame, unknown to other fears,
More darkly sin, by satire kept in awe,
And shrink from ridicule, though not from law.

Such is the force of wit! but not belong
To me the arrows of satiric song;
The royal vices of our age demand
A keener weapon, and a mightier hand.
Still there are follies e'en for me to chase,
And yield at least amusement in the race:
Laugh when I laugh, I seek no other fame;
The cry is up, and scribblers are my game.
Speed, Pegasus!—ye strains of great and small,
Ode, epic, elegy, have at you all!
I too can scrawl, and once upon a time
I pour'd along the town a flood of rhyme.
A schoolboy freak, unworthy praise or blame;
I printed—older children do the same.
'Tis pleasant, sure, to see one's name in print;
A book 's a book, although there 's nothing in't
Not that a title's sounding charm can save
Or scrawl or scribbler from an equal grave:
This Lambe must own, since his patrician name
Fail'd to preserve the spurious farce from shame.*
No matter, George continues still to write,†
Though now the name is veil'd from public sight.
Moved by the great example, I pursue
The self-same road, but make my own review:
Not seek great Jeffrey's, yet like him will be
Self-constituted judge of poesy.

A man must serve his time to every trade
Save censure—critics all are ready made.
Take hackney'd jokes from Miller, got by rote,
With just enough of learning to misquote;
A mind well skill'd to find or forge a fault;
A turn for punning, call it Attic salt;
To Jeffrey go, be silent and discreet,
His pay is just ten sterling pounds per sheet.
Fear not to lie, 'twill seem a lucky hit;
Shrink not from blasphemy, 'twill pass for wit;
Care not for feeling—pass your proper jest,
And stand a critic, hated yet caress'd.

And shall we own such judgment? no—as soon
Seek roses in December—ice in June;
Hope constancy in wind, or corn in chaff;
Believe a woman, or an epitaph,

* This ingenious youth is mentioned more particularly, with his production, in another place.
† In the "Edinburgh Review."

Or any other thing that 's false, before
You trust in critics, who themselves are sore;
Or yield one single thought to be misled
By Jeffrey's heart, or Lambe's Bœotian head.*
To these young tyrants, by themselves misplaced †
Combined usurpers on the throne of taste;
To these, when authors bend in humble awe,
And hail their voice as truth, their word as law—
While these are censors, 'twould be sin to spare;
While such are critics, why should I forbear?
But yet, so near all modern worthies run,
'Tis doubtful whom to seek, or whom to shun;
Nor know we when to spare, or where to strike,
Our bards and censors are so much alike.

Then should you ask me, why I venture o'er ‡
The path that Pope and Gifford trod before;
If not yet sicken'd, you can still proceed:
Go on: my rhyme will tell you as you read.

Time was, ere yet in these degenerate days
Ignoble themes obtain'd mistaken praise,
When sense and wit with poesy allied,
No fabled graces, flourish'd side by side,
From the same fount their inspiration drew,
And, rear'd by taste, bloom'd fairer as they grew.
Then, in this happy isle, a Pope's pure strain
Sought the rapt soul to charm, nor sought in vain:
A polish'd nation's praise aspired to claim,
And raised the people's, as the poet's fame.
Like him great Dryden pour'd the tide of song,
In stream less smooth, indeed, yet doubly strong.
Then Congreve's scenes could cheer, or Otway's melt;
For nature then an English audience felt.
But why these names, or greater still, retrace,
When all to feebler bards resign their place?
Yet to such times our lingering looks are cast,
When taste and reason with those times are past.
Now look around, and turn each trifling page,
Survey the precious works that please the age;
This truth at least let satire's self allow,
No dearth of bards can be complain'd of now:
The loaded press beneath her labor groans,
And printers' devils shake their weary bones;
While Southey's epics cram the creaking shelves,
And Little's lyrics shine in hot-press'd twelves.

* Messrs. Jeffrey and Lambe are the Alpha and Omega, the first and last, of the "Edinburgh Review;" the others are mentioned hereafter.

† IMITATION:

"Stulta est Clementia, cum tot ubique
—— occurras perituræ charitæ."

JUVENAL, *Satire* 1.

‡ IMITATION:

"Cur tamen hoc libeat potius decurrere campo
Per quem magnus equos Auruncæ flexit alumnus:
Si vacat, et placidi rationem admittitis, edam."

JUVENAL, *Satire* 1.

Thus saith the preacher: "Nought beneath the sun
Is new;" * yet still from change to change we run;
What varied wonders tempt us as they pass!
The cow-pox, tractors, galvanism, and gas,
In turns appear, to make the vulgar stare,
Till the swoln bubble bursts—and all is air!
Nor less new schools of Poetry arise
Where dull pretenders grapple for the prize:
O'er taste awhile these pseudo-bards prevail:
Each country book-club bows the knee to Baal,
And hurling lawful genius from the throne,
Erects a shrine and idol of its own;
Some leaden calf—but whom it matters not,
From soaring Southey down to grovelling Stott.†

Behold! in various throngs the scribbling crew,
For notice eager, pass in long review:
Each spurs his jaded Pegasus apace,
And rhyme and blank maintain an equal race;
Sonnets on sonnets crowd, and ode on ode;
And tales of terror jostle on the road;
Immeasurable measures move along,
For simpering folly loves a varied song,
To strange mysterious dulness still the friend,
Admires the strain she cannot comprehend.

Thus Lays of Minstrels—may they be the last!—‡
On half-strung harps whine mournful to the blast;

* Ecclesiastes i.

† Stott, better known in the "Morning Post" by the name of Hafiz. This person is at present the most profound explorer of the bathos. I remember, when the reigning family left Portugal, a special ode of Master Stott's, beginning thus (Stott loquitur quoad Hibernia):—

"Princely offspring of Braganza,
Erin greets thee with a stanza," &c. &c.

Also a sonnet to Rats, well worthy of the subject; and a most thundering ode, commencing as follows:—

"Oh for a lay, loud as the surge
That lashes Lapland's sounding shore!"

Lord have mercy on us! the "Lay of the Last Minstrel" was nothing to this.

‡ See the "Lay of the Last Minstrel," *passim*. Never was any plan so incongruous and absurd as the groundwork of this production. The entrance of Thunder and Lightning prologuizing to Bayes' Tragedy, unfortunately takes away the merit of originality from the dialogue between Messieurs the Spirits of Flood and Fell in the first canto. Then we have the amiable William of Deloraine, "a stark mosstrooper," *videlicet*, a happy compound of poacher, sheep-stealer, and highwayman. The propriety of his magical lady's injunction not to read can only be equalled by his candid acknowledgment of his independence of the trammels of spelling, although, to use his own elegant phrase, "'twas his neck-verse at Hairibee," *i. e.*, the gallows.

The biography of Gilpin Horner, and the marvellous pedestrian page, who travelled twice as fast as his master's horse, without the aid of seven-leagued boots, are *chefs-d'œuvre* in the improvement of taste. For incident we have the invisible, but by no means sparing, box on the ear bestowed on the page, and the entrance of a knight and charger into the castle, under the very natural disguise of a wain of hay. Marmion, the hero of the latter romance, is exactly what William of Deloraine would have been, had he been able to read and write. The poem was manufactured for Messrs. Constable, Murray, and Miller, worshipful booksellers, in consideration of the receipt of a sum of money; and truly, considering the inspiration, it is a very creditable production. If Mr. Scott will write for hire, let him do his best for his paymasters, but not disgrace his genius, which is undoubtedly great, by a repetition of black-letter ballad imitations.

While mountain spirits prate to river sprites,
That dames may listen to the sound at nights;
And goblin brats, of Gilpin Horner's brood,
Decoy young border nobles through the wood,
And skip at every step, Lord knows how high,
And frighten foolish babes, the Lord knows why;
While high-born ladies in their magic cell,
Forbidding knights to read who cannot spell,
Dispatch a courier to a wizard's grave,
And fight with honest men to shield a knave.

Next view in state, proud prancing on his roan,
The golden-crested haughty Marmion,
Now forging scrolls, now foremost in the fight,
Not quite a felon, yet but half a knight,
The gibbet or the field prepared to grace;
A mighty mixture of the great and base.
And think'st thou, Scott! by vain conceit perchance,
On public taste to foist thy stale romance?
Though Murray with his Miller may combine
To yield thy muse just half-a-crown per line?
No! when the sons of song descend to trade,
Their bays are sear, their former laurels fade.
Let such forego the poet's sacred name,
Who rack their brains for lucre, not for fame:
Low may they sink to merited contempt,
And scorn remunerate the mean attempt!
Such be their meed, such still the just reward
Of prostituted muse and hireling bard!
For this we spurn Apollo's venal son,
And bid a long "good-night to Marmion." *

These are the themes that claim our plaudits now;
These are the bards to whom the muse must bow:
While Milton, Dryden, Pope, alike forgot,
Resign their hallow'd bays to Walter Scott.

The time has been, when yet the muse was young,
When Homer swept the lyre, and Maro sung,
An epic scarce ten centuries could claim,
While awe-struck nations hail'd the magic name;
The work of each immortal bard appears
The single wonder of a thousand years.†
Empires have moulder'd from the face of earth,
Tongues have expired with those who gave them birth,
Without the glory such a strain can give,
As even in ruin bids the language live.
Not so with us, though minor bards content,
On one great work a life of labor spent:

* "Good-night to Marmion"—the pathetic and also prophetic exclamation of Henry Blount, Esquire, on the death of honest Marmion.

† As the "Odyssey" is so closely connected with the story of the "Iliad," they may almost be classed as one grand historical poem. In alluding to Milton and Tasso, we consider the "Paradise Lost" and "Gierusalemme Liberata," as their standard efforts, since neither the "Jerusalem Conquered" of the Italian, nor the "Paradise Regained" of the English bard, obtained a proportionate celebrity to their former powers. Query: Which of Mr. Southey's will survive?

With eagle pinion soaring to the skies,
Behold the ballad-monger Southey rise!
To him let Camoens, Milton, Tasso yield,
Whose annual strains, like armies, take the field.

First in the ranks see Joan of Arc advance,
The scourge of England, and the boast of France!
Though burnt by wicked Bedford for a witch,
Behold her statue placed in glory's niche;
Her fetters burst, and just released from prison,
A virgin phœnix from her ashes risen.
Next see tremendous Thalaba come on,*
Arabia's monstrous, wild, and wondrous son;
Domdaniel's dread destroyer, who o'erthrew
More mad magicians than the world ere knew.
Immortal hero! all thy foes o'ercome,
For ever reign—the rival of Tom Thumb!
Since startled metre fled before thy face,
Well wert thou doom'd the last of all thy race!
Well might triumphant genii bear thee hence,
Illustrious conqueror of common sense!
Now, last and greatest, Madoc spreads his sails,
Cacique in Mexico, and prince in Wales;
Tells us strange tales, as other travellers do,
More old than Mandeville's, and not so true.
O Southey, Southey, cease thy varied song!†
A bard may chant too often and too long;
As thou art strong in verse, in mercy spare!
A fourth, alas! were more than we could bear.
But if, in spite of all the world can say,
Thou still wilt verseward plod thy weary way;
If still in Berkley ballads most uncivil,
Thou wilt devote old women to the devil,‡
The babe unborn thy dread intent may rue:
"God help thee," Southey, and thy readers too.§

Next comes the dull disciple of thy school,
That mild apostate from poetic rule,
The simple Wordsworth, framer of a lay
As soft as evening in his favorite May,
Who warns his friend "to shake off toil and trouble,

* "Thalaba," Mr. Southey's second poem, is written in open defiance of precedent and poetry. Mr. S. wished to produce something novel, and succeeded to a miracle. "Joan of Arc" was marvellous enough, but "Thalaba" was one of those poems "which," in the words of Porson, "will be read when Homer and Virgil are forgotten, but—*not till then.*"

† We beg Mr. Southey's pardon; "Madoc disdains the degraded title of epic." See his preface. Why is epic degraded? and by whom? Certainly the late romaunts of Masters Cottle, Laurent Pye, Ogilvy, Hole, and gentle Mistress Cowley, have not exalted the epic muse; but as Mr. Southey's poem "disdains the appellation," allow us to ask—Has he substituted anything better in its stead? or must he be content to rival Sir Richard Blackmore in the quantity as well as quality of his verse?

‡ See "The Old Woman of Berkley," a ballad by Mr. Southey, wherein an aged gentlewoman is carried away by Beelzebub, on a "high trotting-horse."

§ The last line, "God help thee," is an evident plagiarism from the "Anti-Jacobin" to Mr. Southey on his Dactylics. "God help thee, silly one."—Poetry of the "Anti-Jacobin," page 23.

And quit his books for fear of growing double;"*
Who, both by precept and example, shows
That prose is verse, and verse is merely prose;
Convincing all, by demonstration plain,
Poetic souls delight in prose insane;
And Christmas stories tortured into rhyme
Contain the essence of the true sublime.
Thus, when he tells the tale of Betty Foy,
The idiot mother of "an idiot boy,"
A moon-struck, silly lad, who lost his way,
And, like his bard, confounded night with day;†
So close on each pathetic part he dwells,
And each adventure so sublimely tells,
That all who view the "idiot in his glory,"
Conceive the bard the hero of the story.

Shall gentle Coleridge pass unnoticed here,
To turgid ode and tumid stanza dear?
Though themes of innocence amuse him best,
Yet still obscurity's a welcome guest.
If Inspiration should her aid refuse
To him who takes a pixy for a muse,‡
Yet none in lofty numbers can surpass
The bard who soars to elegize an ass.
How well the subject suits his noble mind!
'A fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind."

Oh! wonder-working Lewis! monk, or bard,
Who fain wouldst make Parnassus a churchyard!
Lo! wreaths of yew, not laurel, bind thy brow,
Thy muse a sprite. Apollo's sexton thou!
Whether on ancient tombs thou tak'st thy stand,
By gibbering spectres hail'd, thy kindred band;
Or tracest chaste descriptions on thy page,
To please the females of our modest age;
All hail, M. P.! § from whose infernal brain
Thin sheeted phantoms glide, a grisly train;
At whose command "grim women" throng in crowds,
And kings of fire, of water, and of clouds,
With "small gray men," "wild yagers," and what not,
To crown with honor thee and Walter Scott!

* "Lyrical Ballads," page 4.—"The Tables Turned," Stanza I.

"Up, up, my friend, and clear your looks,
Why all this toil and trouble?
Up, up, my friend, and quit your books,
Or surely you'll grow double."

† Mr. W. in his preface labors hard to prove, that prose and verse are much the same; and certainly his precepts and practice are strictly conformable:—

"And thus to Betty's question he
Made answer, like a traveller bold;
The cock did crow to-whoo, to-whoo,
And the sun did shine so cold." &c. &c.

Lyrical Ballads, page 129.

‡ Coleridge's Poems, page 11, "Songs of the Pixies."—*i. e.*, Devonshire fairies. Page 42, we have, "Lines to a Young Lady," and page 52, "Lines to a Young Ass."

§ "For every one knows little Matt's an M. P."—See a Poem to Mr. Lewis, in the "Statesman," supposed to be written by Mr. Jekyll.

Again, all hail! if tales like thine may please,
St. Luke alone can vanquish the disease:
Even Satan's self with thee might dread to dwell,
And in thy skull discern a deeper hell.

Who in soft guise, surrounded by a choir,
Of virgins melting, not to Vesta's fire,
With sparkling eyes, and cheek by passion flush'd,
Strikes his wild lyre, whilst listening dames are hush'd?
'Tis Little! young Catullus of his day,
As sweet, but as immoral, in his lay!
Grieved to condemn, the muse must still be just,
Nor spare melodious advocates of lust.
Pure is the flame which o'er her altar burns;
From grosser incense with disgust she turns:
Yet kind to youth, this expiation o'er,
She bids thee "mend thy line, and sin no more."

For thee, translator of the tinsel song,
To whom such glittering ornaments belong,
Hibernian Strangford! with thine eyes of blue,*
And boasted locks of red or auburn hue,
Whose plaintive strain each love-sick miss admires,
And o'er harmonious fustian half expires,
Learn, if thou canst, to yield thine author's sense,
Nor vend thy sonnets on a false pretence.
Think'st thou to gain thy verse a higher place,
By dressing Camoens in a suit of lace?
Mend, Strangford! mend thy morals and thy taste;
Be warm, but pure; be amorous, but be chaste:
Cease to deceive; thy pilfer'd harp restore,
Nor teach the Lusian bard to copy Moore.

In many marble-cover'd volumes view
Hayley, in vain attempting something new:
Whether he spin his comedies in rhyme,
Or scrawl, as Wood and Barclay walk, 'gainst time,
His style in youth or age is still the same,
For ever feeble and for ever tame.
Triumphant first see "Temper's Triumphs" shine!
At least I'm sure they triumph'd over mine.
Of "Music's Triumphs," all who read may swear,
That luckless music never triumph'd there.†

Moravians, rise! bestow some meet reward
On dull devotion—Lo! the Sabbath bard,

* The reader who may wish for an explanation of this, may refer to "Strangford's Camoens," p. 127, note to page 56, or to the last page of the Edinburgh review of "Strangford's Camoens."

It is also to be remarked, that the things given to the public as Poems of Camoens, are no more to be found in the original Portuguese, than in the Song of Solomon.

† Hayley's two most notorious verse productions are "Triumphs of Temper," and "Triumphs of Music." He has also written much comedy in rhyme, epistles, &c. &c. As he is rather an elegant writer of notes and biography, let us recommend Pope's advice to Wycherley to Mr. H.'s consideration, viz., "to convert his poetry into prose," which may easily be done by taking away the final syllable of each couplet.

Sepulchral Grahame, pours his notes sublime,
In mangled prose, nor e'en aspires to rhyme,
Breaks into blank the Gospel of St. Luke,
And boldly pilfers from the Pentateuch;
And, undisturb'd by conscientious qualms,
Perverts the Prophets and purloins the Psalms.*

Hail, Sympathy! thy soft idea brings
A thousand visions of a thousand things,
And shows, dissolved in thine own melting tears,
The maudlin prince of mournful sonneteers.
And art thou not their prince, harmonious Bowles!
Thou first, great oracle of tender souls?
Whether in sighing winds thou seek'st relief,
Or consolation in a yellow leaf;
Whether thy muse most lamentably tells
What merry sounds proceed from Oxford bells,†
Or, still in bells delighting, find a friend
In every chime that jingled from Ostend;
Ah! how much juster were thy muse's hap,
If to thy bells thou wouldst but add a cap!
Delightful Bowles! still blessing and still blest,
All love thy strain, but children like it best.
'Tis thine, with gentle Little's moral song,
To soothe the mania of the amorous throng!
With thee our nursery damsels shed their tears,
Ere miss, as yet, completes her infant years;
But in her teens thy whining powers are vain;
She quits poor Bowles for Little's purer strain.
Now to soft themes thou scornest to confine
The lofty numbers of a harp like thine;
"Awake a louder and a loftier strain,"‡
Such as none heard before, or will again;
Where all discoveries jumbled from the flood,
Since first the leaky ark reposed in mud,
By more or less, are sung in every book,
From Captain Noah down to Captain Cook.
Nor this alone; but, pausing on the road,
The bard sighs forth a gentle episode;§
And gravely tells—attend, each beauteous miss!—
When first Madeira trembled to a kiss.
Bowles! in thy memory let this precept dwell,
Stick to thy sonnets, man!—at least they sell.

* Mr. Grahame has poured forth two volumes of cant, under the name of "Sabbath Walks," and "Biblical Pictures."

† See Bowles's Sonnets, &c.—"Sonnet to Oxford," and "Stanzas on hearing the Bells of Ostend."

‡ "Awake a louder," &c. &c., is the first line in Bowles's "Spirit of Discovery," a very spirited and pretty dwarf-epic. Among other exquisite lines we have the following:—

"A kiss
Stole on the list'ning silence, never yet
Here heard, they trembled even as if the power," &c.

That is, the woods of Madeira trembled to a kiss, very much astonished, as well they might be, at such a phenomenon.

§ The episode here alluded to is the story of "Robert a Machin," and "Anna d'Arfet," a pair of constant lovers, who performed the kiss before mentioned, that startled the woods of Madeira.

But if some new-born whim, or larger bribe,
Prompt thy crude brain, and claim thee for a scribe;
If chance some bard, though once by dunces fear'd,
Now, prone in dust, can only be revered;
If Pope, whose fame and genius, from the first,
Have foil'd the best of critics, needs the worst,
Do thou essay; each fault, each failing scan:
The first of poets was, alas! but man.
Rake from each ancient dunghill ev'ry pearl,
Consult Lord Fanny, and confide in Curll;*
Let all the scandals of a former age
Perch on thy pen, and flutter o'er thy page;
Affect a candor which thou canst not feel,
Clothe envy in the garb of honest zeal;
Write, as if St. John's soul could still inspire,
And do from hate what Mallet did for hire.†
Oh! hadst thou lived in that congenial time,
To rave with Dennis, and with Ralph to rhyme;‡
Throng'd with the rest around his living head,
Not rais'd thy hoof against the lion dead;
A meet reward had crown'd thy glorious gains,
And link'd thee to the Dunciad for thy pains.§

Another epic! who inflicts again
More books of blank upon the sons of men?
Bœotian Cottle, rich Bristowa's boast,
Imports old stories from the Cambrian coast,
And sends his goods to market—all alive!
Lines forty thousand, cantos twenty-five!
Fresh fish from Helicon! who 'll buy? who 'll buy?
The precious bargain 's cheap—in faith, not I.
Too much in turtle Bristol's sons delight,
Too much o'er bowls of rack prolong the night!
If Commerce fills the purse, she clogs the brain,
And Amos Cottle strikes the lyre in vain.
In him an author's luckless lot behold,
Condemn'd to make the books which once he sold.
O Amos Cottle!—Phœbus! what a name,
To fill the speaking trump of future fame!—
O Amos Cottle! for a moment think
What meagre profits spring from pen and ink!
When thus devoted to poetic dreams,
Who will peruse thy prostituted reams?
Oh, pen perverted! paper misapplied!
Had Cottle still adorn'd the counter's side,‖

* Curll is one of the heroes of the "Dunciad," and was a bookseller. Lord Fanny is the poetical name of Lord Hervey, author of "Lines to the Imitator of Horace."

† Lord Bolingbroke hired Mallet to traduce Pope after his decease, because the poet had retained some copies of a work by Lord Bolingbroke (the "Patriot King,") which that splendid but malignant genius had ordered to be destroyed.

‡ Dennis the critic, and Ralph the rhymester:—

"Silence, ye wolves! while Ralph to Cynthia howls,
Making night hideous; answer him, ye owls!"—*Dunciad.*

§ See Bowles's late edition of Pope's Works, for which he received £300: thus Mr. B. has experienced how much easier it is to profit by the reputation of another than to elevate his own.

‖ Mr. Cottle, Amos, Joseph, I don't know which, but one or both, once sellers

Bent o'er the desk, or, born to useful toils,
Been taught to make the paper which he soils,
Plough'd, delved, or plied the oar with lusty limb,
He had not sung of Wales, nor I of him.

As Sisyphus against the infernal steep
Rolls the huge rock, whose motions ne'er may sleep,
So up thy hill, ambrosial Richmond! heaves
Dull Maurice all his granite weight of leaves: *
Smooth, solid monuments of mental pain!
The petrifactions of a plodding brain,
That ere they reach the top fall lumbering back again.

With broken lyre, and cheek serenely pale,
Lo! sad Alcæus wanders down the vale;
Though fair they rose, and might have bloom'd at last,
His hopes have perish'd by the northern blast:
Nipp'd in the bud by Caledonian gales,
His blossoms wither as the blast prevails!
O'er his lost works let *classic* Sheffield weep;
May no rude hand disturb their early sleep! †

Yet, say! why should the bard at once resign
His claim to favor from the sacred Nine?
For ever startled by the mingled howl
Of northern wolves, that still in darkness prowl;
A coward brood, which mangle as they prey,
By hellish instinct, all that cross their way;
Aged or young, the living or the dead,
No mercy find—these harpies must be fed.
Why do the injured unresisting yield
The calm possession of their native field?
Why tamely thus before their fangs retreat,
Nor hunt the bloodhounds back to Arthur's Seat? ‡

Health to immortal Jeffrey! once, in name,
England could boast a judge almost the same;
In soul so like, so merciful, yet just,
Some think that Satan has resign'd his trust,
And given the spirit to the world again,
To sentence letters, as he sentenced men.
With hand less mighty, but with heart as black,
With voice as willing to decree the rack;
Bred in the courts betimes, though all that law
As yet hath taught him is to find a flaw.
Since well instructed in the patriot school
To rail at party, though a party tool,

of books they did not write, and now writers of books that do not sell, have published a pair of epics. "Alfred,"—(poor Alfred! Pye has been at him too!)—"Alfred" and the "Fall of Cambria."

* Mr. Maurice hath manufactured the component parts of a ponderous quarto, upon the "Beauties of Richmond Hill," and the like;—it also takes in a charming view of Turnham Green, Hammersmith, Brentford, Old and New, and the parts adjacent.

† Poor Montgomery, though praised by every English Review, has been bitterly reviled by the Edinburgh. After all, the bard of Sheffield is a man of considerable genius; his "Wanderer of Switzerland" is worth a thousand "Lyrical Ballads," and at least fifty "degraded epics."

‡ Arthur's Seat, the hill which overhangs Edinburgh.

Who knows, if chance his patrons should restore
Back to the sway they forfeited before,
His scribbling toils some recompense may meet,
And raise this Daniel to the judgment-seat?
Let Jeffries' shade indulge the pious hope,
And greeting thus, present him with a rope:
"Heir to my virtues! man of equal mind;
Skill'd to condemn as to traduce mankind,
This cord receive, for thee reserved with care,
To wield in judgment, and at length to wear."

Health to great Jeffrey! Heaven preserve his life,
To flourish on the fertile shores of Fife,
And guard it sacred in its future wars,
Since authors sometimes seek the field of Mars!
Can none remember that eventful day,
That ever glorious, almost fatal fray,
When Little's leadless pistol met his eye,
And Bow Street myrmidons stood laughing by?*
Oh, day disastrous! on her firm-set rock,
Dunedin's castle felt a secret shock:
Dark roll'd the sympathetic waves of Forth,
Low groan'd the startled whirlwinds of the north;
Tweed ruffled half his waves to form a tear,
The other half pursued its calm career;†
Arthur's steep summit nodded to its base,
The surly Tolbooth scarcely kept her place;
The Tolbooth felt—for marble sometimes can,
On such occasions, feel as much as man—
The Tolbooth felt defrauded of his charms,
If Jeffrey died, except within her arms:‡
Nay, last, not least, on that portentous morn,
The sixteenth story where himself was born,
His patrimonial garret, fell to ground,
And pale Edina shudder'd at the sound:
Strew'd were the streets around with milk-white reams,
Flow'd all the Canongate with inky streams;
This of his candor seem'd the sable dew,
That of his valor show'd the bloodless hue;
And all with justice deem'd the two combined
The mingled emblems of his mighty mind.
But Caledonia's goddess hover'd o'er
The field, and saved him from the wrath of Moore;
From either pistol snatch'd the vengeful lead,
And straight restored it to her favorite's head;

* In 1806, Messrs. Jeffrey and Moore met at Chalk Farm. The duel was prevented by the interference of the magistracy; and, on examination, the balls of the pistols, like the courage of the combatants, were found to have evaporated. This incident gave occasion to much waggery in the daily prints.

† The Tweed here behaved with proper decorum; it would have been highly reprehensible in the English half of the river to have shown the smallest symptom of apprehension.

‡ This display of sympathy on the part of the Tolbooth, (the principal prison in Edinburgh,) which truly seems to have been most affected on this occasion, is much to be commended. It was to be apprehended that the many unhappy criminals executed in the front might have rendered the edifice more callous. She is said to be of the softer sex, because her delicacy of feeling on this day was truly feminine, though, like most feminine impulses, perhaps a little selfish.

That head, with greater than magnetic power,
Caught it, as Danae caught the golden shower,
And, though the thickening dross will scarce refine,
Augments its ore, and is itself a mine.
"My son," she cried, "ne'er thirst for gore again,
Resign the pistol, and resume the pen;
O'er politics and poesy preside,
Boast of thy country, and Britannia's guide!
For long as Albion's heedless sons submit,
Or Scottish taste decides on English wit,
So long shall last thine unmolested reign,
Nor any dare to take thy name in vain.
Behold, a chosen band shall aid thy plan,
And own thee chieftain of the critic clan.
First in the ranks illustrious shall be seen
The travell'd thane, Athenian Aberdeen.*
Herbert shall wield Thor's hammer,† and sometimes,
In gratitude, thou'lt praise his rugged rhymes.
Smug Sydney too thy bitter page shall seek,‡
And classic Hallam, much renown'd for Greek;§
Scott may perchance his name and influence lend,
And paltry Pillans shall traduce his friend;‖
While gay Thalia's luckless votary, Lambe,¶
As he himself was damn'd, shall try to damn.
Known be thy name, unbounded be thy sway!
Thy Holland's banquets shall each toil repay;
While grateful Britain yields the praise she owes,
To Holland's hirelings, and to learning's foes.
Yet mark one caution, ere thy next Review
Spread its light wings of saffron and of blue,

* His lordship has been much abroad, is a member of the Athenian Society, and Reviewer of "Gell's Topography of Troy."

† Mr. Herbert is a translator of Icelandic and other poetry. One of the principal pieces is a "Song on the Recovery of Thor's Hammer:" the translation is a pleasant chant in the vulgar tongue, and endeth thus:—

"Instead of money and rings, I wot,
The hammer's bruises were her lot:
Thus Odin's son his hammer got."

‡ The Reverend Sydney Smith, the reputed author of "Peter Plymley's Letters," and sundry criticisms.

§ Mr. Hallam reviewed Payne Knight's "Taste," and was exceedingly severe on some Greek verses therein: it was not discovered that the lines were Pindar's till the press rendered it impossible to cancel the critique, which still stands an everlasting monument to Hallam's ingenuity.

The said Hallam is meensed, because he is falsely accused, seeing that he never dineth at Holland House. If this be true, I am sorry—not for having said so, but on his account, as I understand his lordship's feasts are preferable to his compositions. If he did not review Lord Holland's performance, I am glad, because it must have been painful to read, and irksome to praise it. If Mr. Hallam will tell me who did review it, the real name shall find a place in the text; provided, nevertheless, the said name be of two orthodox musical syllables, and will come into the verse; till then, Hallam must stand for want of a better.

‖ Pillans was a tutor at Eton, and subsequently rector of the High School, and a professor in the University of Edinburgh.

¶ The Honorable G. Lambe reviewed "Beresford's Miseries," and is moreover author of a farce enacted with much applause at the Priory, Stanmore; and damned with great expedition at the late theatre, Covent Garden. It was entitled "Whistle for It."

Beware lest blundering Brougham destroy the sale,*
Turn beef to bannocks, cauliflowers to kail."
Thus having said, the kilted goddess kist
Her son, and vanish'd in a Scottish mist.†

Illustrious Holland! hard would be his lot,
His hirelings mentioned, and himself forgot!
Holland, with Henry Petty at his back,
The whipper-in and huntsman of the pack.
Blest be the banquets spread at Holland House,
Where Scotchmen feed, and critics may carouse!
Long, long beneath that hospitable roof
Shall Grub Street dine, while duns are kept aloof.
See honest Hallam lay aside his fork,
Resume his pen, review his Lordship's work,
And, grateful to the founder of the feast,
Declare his landlord can translate at least! ‡
Dunedin! view thy children with delight,
They write for food—and feed because they write:
And lest, when heated with the unusual grape,
Some glowing thoughts should to the press escape,
And tinge with red the female reader's cheek,
My lady skims the cream of each critique;
Breathes o'er the page her purity of soul,
Reforms each error, and refines the whole.§

Now to the Drama turn—Oh! motley sight,
What precious scenes the wondering eyes invite!
Puns, and a prince within a barrel pent,‖
And Dibdin's nonsense, yield complete content.
Though now, thank Heaven! the Rosciomania's o'er,
And full-grown actors are endured once more;
Yet what avail their vain attempts to please,
While British critics suffer scenes like these?
While Reynolds vents his "Dammes!" "Poohs!" and
"Zounds!"¶

* Mr. Brougham, in No. XXV. of the Edinburgh Review, throughout the article concerning Don Pedro de Cevallos, has displayed more politics than policy; many of the worthy burgesses of Edinburgh being so incensed at the infamous principles it evinces, as to have withdrawn their subscriptions.

It seems that Mr. Brougham is not a Pict, as I supposed, but a Borderer, and his name is pronounced Broom, from Trent to Tay:—So be it.

† I ought to apologize to the worthy deities for introducing a new goddess with short petticoats to their notice; but, alas! what was to be done? I could not say Caledonia's genius, it being well known there is no genius to be found from Clackmannan to Caithness; yet without supernatural agency, how was Jeffrey to be saved? The national "kelpies," &c., are too unpoetical, and the "brownies" and "gude neighbours" (spirits of a good disposition) refused to extricate him. A goddess therefore has been called for the purpose: and great ought to be the gratitude of Jeffrey, seeing it is the only communication he ever held, or is likely to hold, with anything heavenly.

‡ Lord H. has translated some specimens of Lope de Vega, inserted in his Life of the author: both are bepraised by his *disinterested* guests.

§ Certain it is, her ladyship is suspected of having displayed her matchless wit in the "Edinburgh Review;" however that may be, we know from good authority that the manuscripts are submitted to her perusal—no doubt for correction.

‖ In the melodrama of Tekell, that heroic prince is clapt into a barrel on the stage: a new asylum for distressed heroes.

¶ All these are favorite expressions of Mr. R., and prominent in his comedies, living and defunct.

And commonplace and common sense confounds?
While Kenney's "World," just suffer'd to proceed,
Proclaims the audience very kind indeed!
And Beaumont's pilfer'd Caratach affords
A tragedy complete in all but words?*
Who but must mourn, while these are all the rage,
The degradation of our vaunted stage?
Heavens! is all sense of shame and talent gone!
Have we no living bard of merit?—none!
Awake, George Colman! Cumberland, awake!
Ring the alarum-bell! let folly quake!
O Sheridan! if aught can move thy pen,
Let Comedy resume her throne again;
Abjure the mummery of German schools,
Leave new Pizarros to translating fools;
Give, as thy last memorial to the age,
One classic drama, and reform the stage.
Gods! o'er those boards shall Folly rear her head,
Where Garrick trod, and Kemble lives to tread?
On those shall Farce display Buffoon'ry's mask,
And Hook conceal his heroes in a cask?
Shall sapient managers new scenes produce
From Cherry, Skeffington, and Mother Goose?
While Shakspeare, Otway, Massinger, forgot,
On stalls must moulder, or in closets rot?
Lo! with what pomp the daily prints proclaim
The rival candidates for Attic fame!
In grim array though Lewis' spectres rise,
Still Skeffington and Goose divide the prize.
And sure *great* Skeffington must claim our praise,
For skirtless coats and skeletons of plays,
Renown'd alike; whose genius ne'er confines
Her flight to garnish Greenwood's gay designs;†
Nor sleeps with "Sleeping Beauties," but anon
In five facetious acts comes thundering on,‡
While poor John Bull, bewilder'd with the scene,
Stares, wondering what the devil it can mean;
But as some hands applaud—a venal few—
Rather than sleep, why John applauds it too.

Such are we now. Ah! wherefore should we turn
To what our fathers were, unless to mourn?
Degenerate Britons! are ye dead to shame,
Or, kind to dulness, do you fear to blame?
Well may the nobles of our present race
Watch each distortion of a Naldi's face;
Well may they smile on Italy's buffoons,
And worship Catalani's pantaloons,§

* Mr. T. Sheridan, the new manager of Drury Lane Theatre, stripped the tragedy of "Bonduca" of the dialogue, and exhibited the scenes as the spectacle of Caractacus. Was this worthy of his sire? or of himself?

† Mr. Greenwood is, we believe, scene-painter to Drury Lane Theatre; as such, Mr. S. is much indebted to him.

‡ Mr. S. is the illustrious author of the "Sleeping Beauty;" and some comedies, particularly "Maids and Bachelors;" Baccalaurii baculo magis quam lauro digni.

§ Naldi and Catalani require little notice; for the visage of the one, and the

Since their own drama yields no fairer trace
Of wit than puns, of humor than grimace.

Then let Ausonia, skill'd in every art
To soften manners, but corrupt the heart,
Pour her exotic follies o'er the town,
To sanction Vice, and hunt Decorum down:
Let wedded strumpets languish o'er Deshayes,
And bless the promise which his form displays:
While Gayton bounds before th' enraptured looks
Of hoary marquises and stripling dukes;
Let high-born lechers eye the lively Presle
Twirl her light limbs, that spurn the needless veil;
Let Angiolini bare her breast of snow,
Wave the white arm, and point the pliant toe;
Collini trill her love-inspiring song,
Strain her fair neck, and charm the listening throng!
Raise not your scythe, suppressors of our vice!
Reforming saints! too delicately nice!
By whose decrees, our sinful souls to save,
No Sunday tankards foam, no barbers shave;
And beer undrawn, and beards unmown, display
Your holy reverence for the Sabbath-day.

Or, hail at once the patron and the pile
Of vice and folly, Greville and Argyle![*]
Where yon proud palace, Fashion's hallow'd fane,
Spreads wide her portals for the motley train,
Behold the new Petronius of the day,[†]
The arbiter of pleasure and of play!
There the hired eunuch, the Hesperian choir,
The melting lute, the soft lascivious lyre,
The song from Italy, the step from France,
The midnight orgy, and the mazy dance,
The smile of beauty, and the flush of wine,
For fops, fools, gamesters, knaves, and lords combine.
Each to his humor—Comus all allows;
Champagne, dice, music, or your neighbor's spouse.
Talk not to us, ye starving sons of trade!
Of piteous ruin, which ourselves have made;
In Plenty's sunshine Fortune's minions bask,
Nor think of poverty, except *en masque*,

salary of the other, will enable us long to recollect these amusing vagabonds; besides we are still black and blue from the squeeze on the first night of the lady's appearance in trousers.

[*] To prevent any blunder, such as mistaking a street for a man, I beg leave to state that it is the Institution, and not the Duke of that name, which is here alluded to.

A gentleman, with whom I am slightly acquainted, lost in the Argyle Rooms several thousand pounds at backgammon; it is but justice to the manager in this instance to say, that some degree of disapprobation was manifested. But why are the implements of gaming allowed in a place devoted to the society of both sexes? A pleasant thing for the wives and daughters of those who are blessed or cursed with such connections, to hear the billiard-tables rattling in one room and the dice in another! That this is the case, I myself can testify, as a late unworthy member of an institution which materially affects the morals of the higher orders, while the lower may not even move to the sound of a taber and fiddle without a chance of indictment for riotous behavior.

[†] Petronius, "Arbiter elegantiarum" to Nero, "and a very pretty fellow in his day," as Mr. Congreve's "Old Bachelor" saith.

When for the night some lately titled ass
Appears the beggar which his grandsire was.
The curtain dropp'd, the gay burletta o'er,
The audience take their turn upon the floor;
Now round the room the circling dowagers sweep,
Now in loose waltz the thin-clad daughters leap:
The first in lengthen'd line majestic swim,
The last display the free, unfetter'd limb!
Those for Hibernia's lusty sons repair
With art the charms which nature could not spare;
These after husbands wing their eager flight,
Nor leave much mystery for the nuptial night.

Oh! blest retreats of infamy and ease,
Where, all forgotten but the power to please,
Each maid may give a loose to genial thought,
Each swain may teach new systems, or be taught:
There the blithe youngster, just return'd from Spain,
Cuts the light pack, or calls the rattling main;
The jovial caster's set, and seven 's the nick,
Or—done!—a thousand on the coming trick!
If, mad with loss, existence 'gins to tire,
And all your hope or wish is to expire,
Here 's Powell's pistol ready for your life,
And, kinder still, a Paget for your wife:
Fit consummation of an earthly race,
Begun in folly, ended in disgrace,
While none but menials, o'er the bed of death,
Wash thy red wounds, or watch thy wavering breath;
Traduced by liars, and forgot by all,
The mangled victim of a drunken brawl,
To live like Clodius, and like Falkland fall.*

Truth! rouse some genuine bard, and guide his hand,
To drive this pestilence from out the land.
E'en I—least thinking of a thoughtless throng,
Just skill'd to know the right and choose the wrong,
Freed at that age when reason's shield is lost,
To fight my course through passion's countless host,
Whom every path of pleasure's flowery way
Has lured in turn, and all have led astray—
E'en I must raise my voice, e'en I must feel
Such scenes, such men, destroy the public weal;
Although some kind, censorious friend will say,
"What art thou better, meddling fool, than they?"
And every brother rake will smile to see
That miracle, a moralist in me.

* Mutato nomine de te
Fabula narratur.

I knew the late Lord Falkland well. On Sunday night I beheld him presiding at his own table, in all the honest pride of hospitality; on Wednesday morning, at three o'clock, I saw stretched before me all that remained of courage, feeling, and a host of passions. He was a gallant and successful officer: his faults were the faults of a sailor; as such, Britons will forgive them. He died like a brave man in a better cause. for had he fallen in like manner on the deck of the frigate to which he was just appointed, his last moments would have been held up by his countrymen as an example to succeeding heroes.

No matter: when some bard in virtue strong—
Gifford perchance—shall raise the chastening song,
Then sleep my pen for ever! and my voice
Be only heard to hail him, and rejoice;
Rejoice, and yield my feeble praise, though I
May feel the lash that Virtue must apply.

As for the smaller fry, who swarm in shoals
From silly Hafiz up to simple Bowles,*
Why should we call them from their dark abode,
In broad St. Giles's or in Tottenham Road?
Or (since some men of fashion nobly dare
To scrawl in verse) from Bond Street or the Square?
If things of ton their harmless lays indite,
Most wisely doom'd to shun the public sight,
What harm? In spite of every critic elf,
Sir T. may read his stanzas to himself;
Miles Andrews still his strength in couplets try,
And live in prologues, though his dramas die.
Lords too are bards, such things at times befall,
And 'tis some praise in peers to write at all.
Yet, did or taste or reason sway the times,
Ah! who would take their titles with their rhymes?
Roscommon! Sheffield! with your spirits fled,
No future laurels deck a noble head;
No muse will cheer with renovating smile
The paralytic puling of Carlisle:
The puny schoolboy and his early lay
Men pardon, if his follies pass away:
But who forgives the senior's ceaseless verse,
Whose hairs grow hoary as his rhymes grow worse?
What heterogeneous honors deck the peer!
Lord, rhymester, *petit-maître*, pamphleteer!†
So dull in youth, so drivelling in his age,
His scenes alone had damn'd our sinking stage;
But managers for once cried, "Hold, enough!"
Nor drugg'd their audience with the tragic stuff.
Yet at their judgment let his Lordship laugh,
And ease his volumes in congenial calf:
Yes! doff that covering, where morocco shines,
And hang a calf-skin on those recreant lines.‡

With you, ye Druids! rich in native lead,
Who daily scribble for your daily bread,
With you I war not: Gifford's heavy hand
Has crush'd, without remorse, your numerous band.

* What would be the sentiments of the Persian Anacreon, Hafiz, could he rise from his splendid sepulchre at Sheeraz, where he reposes with Ferdousi and Sadi, the oriental Homer and Catullus, and behold his name assumed by one Stott of Dromore, the most impudent and execrable of literary poachers for the daily prints!

† The Earl of Carlisle has lately published an eighteen-penny pamphlet on the state of the stage, and offers his plan for building a new theatre: it is to be hoped his lordship will be permitted to bring forward anything for the stage—except his own tragedies.

‡ "Doff that lion's hide,
And hang a calf-skin on those recreant limbs."
SHAKSPEARE, *King John*.

Lord C.'s works, most resplendently bound, form a conspicuous ornament to his book-shelves: "The rest is all but leather and prunella."

On "all the talents" vent your venal spleen;
Want is your plea, let pity be your screen.
Let monodies on Fox regale your crew,
And Melville's Mantle prove a blanket too.
One common Lethe waits each hapless bard,
And, peace be with you! 'tis your best reward.
Such damning fame as Dunciads only give,
Could bid your lines beyond a morning live;
But now at once your fleeting labors close,
With names of greater note in blest repose.
Far be't from me unkindly to upbraid
The lovely Rosa's prose in masquerade,
Whose strains, the faithful echoes of her mind,
Leave wondering comprehension far behind.*
Though Bell has lost his nightingales and owls,
Matilda snivels still, and Hafiz howls;
And Crusca's spirit, rising from the dead,
Revives in Laura, Quiz, and X. Y. Z.†

When some brisk youth, the tenant of a stall,
Employs a pen less pointed than his awl,
Leaves his snug shop, forsakes his store of shoes,
St. Crispin quits, and cobbles for the muse,
Heavens! how the vulgar stare! how crowds applaud!
How ladies read, and literati laud!
If chance some wicked wag should pass his jest,
'Tis sheer ill-nature—don't the world know best?
Genius must guide when wits admire the rhyme,
And Capel Lofft declares 'tis quite sublime.‡
Hear, then, ye hapless sons of needless trade!
Swains! quit the plough, resign the useless spade!
Lo! Burns and Bloomfield, nay, a greater far,
Gifford was born beneath an adverse star,
Forsook the labors of a servile state,
Stemm'd the rude storm, and triumph'd over fate:
Then why no more? if Phœbus smiled on you,
Bloomfield! why not on brother Nathan too?
Him too the mania, not the muse, has seized:
Not inspiration, but a mind diseased:
And now no boor can seek his last abode,
No common be enclosed, without an ode.§
Oh! since increased refinement deigns to smile
On Britain's sons, and bless our genial isle,
Let Poesy go forth, pervade the whole,
Alike the rustic, and mechanic soul.
Ye tuneful cobblers! still your notes prolong,

* This lively little Jessica, the daughter of the noted Jew K——, seems to be a follower of the Della Crusca school, and has published two volumes of very respectable absurdities in rhyme, as times go; besides sundry novels in the style of the first edition of the "Monk."

† These are the signatures of various worthies who figure in the poetical departments of the newspapers.

‡ Capel Lofft, Esq., the Mæcenas of shoemakers, and preface-writer-general to distressed versemen; a kind of gratis accoucheur to those who wish to be delivered of rhyme, but do not know how to bring forth.

§ See Nathaniel Bloomfield's ode, elegy, or whatever he or any one else chooses to call it, on the enclosure of "Honington Green."

Compose at once a slipper and a song;
So shall the fair your handiwork peruse,
Your sonnets sure shall please—perhaps your shoes.
May moorland weavers boast Pindaric skill,*
And tailors' lays be longer than their bill!
While punctual beaux reward the grateful notes,
And pay for poems—when they pay for coats.

To the famed throng now paid the tribute due,
Neglected genius! let me turn to you.
Come forth, O Campbell! give thy talents scope;
Who dares aspire if thou must cease to hope?
And thou, melodious Rogers! rise at last,†
Recall the pleasing memory of the past;
Arise! let blest remembrance still inspire,
And strike to wonted tones thy hallow'd lyre;
Restore Apollo to his vacant throne,
Assert thy country's honor and thine own.
What! must deserted Poesy still weep
Where her last hopes with pious Cowper sleep?
Unless, perchance, from his cold bier she turns
To deck the turf that wraps her minstrel, Burns!
No! though contempt hath mark'd the spurious brood,
The race who rhyme from folly, or for food,
Yet still some genuine sons 'tis hers to boast,
Who, least affecting, still affect the most:
Feel as they write, and write but as they feel—
Bear witness Gifford, Sotheby, Macneil.‡

"Why slumbers Gifford?" once was ask'd in vain! §
Why slumbers Gifford? let us ask again.
Are there no follies for his pen to purge?
Are there no fools whose backs demand the scourge?
Are there no sins for satire's bard to greet?
Stalks not gigantic Vice in every street?
Shall peers or princes tread pollution's path?
And 'scape alike the law's and muse's wrath?
Nor blaze with guilty glare through future time,
Eternal beacons of consummate crime?
Arouse thee, Gifford! be thy promise claim'd,
Make bad men better, or at least ashamed.

* *Vide* "Recollections of a Weaver in the Moorlands of Staffordshire."

† It would be superfluous to recall to the mind of the reader the authors of "The Pleasures of Memory" and "The Pleasures of Hope," the most beautiful didactic poems in our language, if we except Pope's "Essay on Man;" but so many poetasters have started up, that even the names of Campbell and Rogers become strange.

‡ Gifford, author of the "Baviad" and "Mæviad," the first satires of the day, and translator of Juvenal.

Sotheby, translator of Wieland's "Oberon," and Virgil's "Georgics," and author of "Saul," an epic poem.

Macneil, whose poems are deservedly popular, particularly "Scotland's Scaith; or, The Woes of War," of which ten thousand copies were sold in one month.

§ Mr. Gifford promised publicly that the "Baviad" and "Mæviad" should not be his last original works. Let him remember "Mox in reluctantes dracones."

Unhappy White! while life was in its spring,*
And thy young muse just waved her joyous wing,
The spoiler came; and all thy promise fair
Has sought the grave, to sleep for ever there.
Oh! what a noble heart was here undone,
When Science's self destroy'd her favorite son!
Yes, she too much indulged thy fond pursuit,
She sow'd the seeds, but death has reap'd the fruit.
'Twas thine own genius gave the final blow,
And help'd to plant the wound that laid thee low:
So the struck eagle, stretch'd upon the plain,
No more through rolling clouds to soar again,
View'd his own feather on the fatal dart,
And wing'd the shaft that quiver'd in his heart;
Keen were his pangs, but keener far to feel,
He nursed the pinion which impell'd the steel;
While the same plumage that had warm'd his nest
Drank the last life-drop of his bleeding breast.

There be, who say, in these enlighten'd days,
That splendid lies are all the poet's praise;
That strain'd invention, ever on the wing,
Alone impels the modern bard to sing:
'Tis true, that all who rhyme—nay, all who write,
Shrink from that fatal word to genius—trite;
Yet Truth will sometimes lend her noblest fires,
And decorate the verse herself inspires:
This fact in Virtue's name let Crabbe attest;
Though nature's sternest painter, yet the best.

And here let Shee and genius find a place,†
Whose pen and pencil yield an equal grace:
To guide whose hands the sister arts combine,
And trace the poet's or the painter's line;
Whose magic touch can bid the canvas glow,
Or pour the easy rhyme's harmonious flow;
While honors, doubly merited, attend
The poet's rival, but the painter's friend.

Blest is the man who dares approach the bower
Where dwelt the muses at their natal hour;
Whose steps have press'd, whose eye has mark'd afar,
The clime that nursed the sons of song and war,
The scenes which glory still must hover o'er,
Her place of birth, her own Achaian shore.
But doubly blest is he whose heart expands
With hallow'd feelings for those classic lands:
Who rends the veil of ages long gone by,
And views their remnants with a poet's eye!

* Henry Kirke White died at Cambridge in October, 1806, in consequence of too much exertion in the pursuit of studies that would have matured a mind which disease and poverty could not impair, and which death itself destroyed rather than subdued. His poems abound in such beauties as must impress the reader with the liveliest regret that so short a period was allotted to talents which would have dignified even the sacred functions he was destined to assume.

† Mr. Shee, author of "Rhymes on Art," and "Elements of Art."

Wright! 'twas thy happy lot at once to view*
Those shores of glory, and to sing them too;
And sure no common muse inspired thy pen
To hail the land of gods and godlike men.

And you, associate bards! who snatch'd to light†
Those gems too long withheld from modern sight;
Whose mingling taste combined to cull the wreath
Where Attic flowers Aonian odors breathe,
And all their renovated fragrance flung,
To grace the beauties of your native tongue;
Now let those minds, that nobly could transfuse
The glorious spirit of the Grecian muse,
Though soft the echo, scorn a borrow'd tone:
Resign Achaia's lyre, and strike your own.

Let these, or such as these, with just applause
Restore the muse's violated laws;
But not in flimsy Darwin's pompous chime,
That mighty master of unmeaning rhyme;
Whose gilded cymbals, more adorn'd than clear,
The eye delighted, but fatigued the ear;
In show the simple lyre could once surpass,
But now, worn down, appear in native brass;
While all his train of hovering sylphs around
Evaporate in similes and sound:
Him let them shun, with him let tinsel die:
False glare attracts, but more offends the eye. ‡

Yet let them not to vulgar Wordsworth stoop,
The meanest object of the lowly group,
Whose verse, of all but childish prattle void,
Seems blessed harmony to Lamb and Lloyd: §
Let them—But hold, my muse, nor dare to teach
A strain far, far beyond thy humble reach:
The native genius with their being given
Will point the path, and peal their notes to heaven.

And thou, too, Scott! resign to minstrels rude ‖
The wilder slogan of a border feud:
Let others spin their meagre lines for hire;
Enough for genius, if itself inspire!
Let Southey sing, although his teeming muse,
Prolific every spring, be too profuse;
Let simple Wordsworth chime his childish verse,
And brother Coleridge lull the babe at nurse;
Let spectre-mongering Lewis aim, at most,
To rouse the galleries, or to raise a ghost;

* Mr. Wright, late Consul-General for the Seven Islands, is author of a very beautiful poem just published. It is entitled "Horæ Ionicæ," and is descriptive of the isles and adjacent coast of Greece.

† The translators of the "Anthology" have since published separate poems, which evince genius that only requires opportunity to attain eminence.

‡ The neglect of the "Botanic Garden" is some proof of returning taste. The scenery is its sole recommendation.

§ Messrs. Lamb and Lloyd, the most ignoble followers of Southey and Co.

‖ By the by, I hope that in Mr. Scott's next poem, his hero or heroine will be less addicted to "Gramarye," and more to grammar, than the Lady of the Lay, and her bravo, William of Deloraine.

Let Moore be lewd: let Strangford steal from Moore,
And swear that Camoens sang such notes of yore;
Let Hayley hobble on, Montgomery rave,
And godly Grahame chant a stupid stave;
Let sonneteering Bowles his strains refine,
And whine and whimper to the fourteenth line;
Let Stott, Carlisle,* Matilda, and the rest
Of Grub Street, and of Grosvenor Place the best,
Scrawl on, till death release us from the strain,
Or Common Sense assert her rights again.
But thou, with powers that mock the aid of praise,
Shouldst leave to humbler bards ignoble lays:
Thy country's voice, the voice of all the Nine,
Demand a hallow'd harp—that harp is thine,
Say! will not Caledonia's annals yield
The glorious record of some nobler field,
Than the wild foray of a plundering clan,
Whose proudest deeds disgrace the name of man?
Or Marmion's acts of darkness, fitter food
For outlaw'd Sherwood's tales of Robin Hood?
Scotland! still proudly claim thy native bard,
And be thy praise his first, his best reward!
Yet not with thee alone his name should live,
But own the vast renown a world can give;
Be known, perchance, when Albion is no more,
And tell the tale of what she was before;
To future times her faded fame recall,
And save her glory, though his country fall.

Yet what avails the sanguine poet's hope,
To conquer ages, and with time to cope?
New eras spread their wings, new nations rise,
And other victors fill the applauding skies;†
A few brief generations fleet along,
Whose sons forget the poet and his song:

* It may be asked why I have censured the Earl of Carlisle, my guardian and relative, to whom I dedicated a volume of puerile poems a few years ago. The guardianship was nominal, at least so far as I have been able to discover; the relationship I cannot help, and am very sorry for it; but as his lordship seemed to forget it on a very essential occasion to me, I shall not burden my memory with the recollection. I do not think that personal differences sanction the unjust condemnation of a brother scribbler; but I see no reason why they should act as a preventive, when the author, noble or ignoble, has for a series of years beguiled a "discerning public" (as the advertisements have it) with divers reams of most orthodox, imperial nonsense. Besides, I do not step aside to vituperate the Earl; no—his works come fairly in review with those of other patrician literati. If, before I escaped my teens, I said anything in favor of his lordship's paper books, it was in the way of dutiful dedication, and more from the advice of others than my own judgment, and I seize the first opportunity of pronouncing my sincere recantation. I have heard that some persons conceive me to be under obligations to Lord Carlisle; if so, I shall be most particularly happy to learn what they are, and when conferred, that they may be duly appreciated and publicly acknowledged. What I have humbly advanced as an opinion on his printed things, I am prepared to support, if necessary, by quotations from elegies, eulogies, odes, episodes, and certain facetious and dainty tragedies bearing his name and mark:—

"What can ennoble knaves, or *fools*, or cowards?
Alas! not all the blood of all the Howards!"

So says Pope. Amen.

† "Tollere humo, victorque virum volitare per ora."—VIRGIL.

E'en now, what once-loved minstrels scarce may claim,
The transient mention of a dubious name!
When fame's loud trump hath blown its noblest blast,
Though long the sound, the echo sleeps at last;
And glory, like the phœnix 'midst her fires,
Exhales her odors, blazes, and expires.

Shall hoary Granta call her sable sons,
Expert in science, more expert at puns?
Shall these approach the muse? Ah, no! she flies,
And even spurns the great Seatonian prize;
Though printers condescend the press to soil
With rhyme by Hoare, and epic blank by Hoyle:
Not him whose page, if still upheld by whist,
Requires no sacred theme to bid us list.*
Ye! who in Granta's honors would surpass,
Must mount her Pegasus, a full-grown ass;
A foal well worthy of her ancient dam,
Whose Helicon is duller than her Cam.

There Clarke, still striving piteously "to please,"
Forgetting doggrel leads not to degrees,
A would-be satirist, a hired buffoon,
A monthly scribbler of some low lampoon,
Condemn'd to drudge, the meanest of the mean,
And furbish falsehoods for a magazine,
Devotes to scandal his congenial mind;
Himself a living libel on mankind.†

Oh! dark asylum of a Vandal race!‡
At once the boast of learning and disgrace;
So sunk in dulness, and so lost to shame,
That Smythe and Hodgson scarce redeem thy fame!§
But where fair Isis rolls her purer wave,
The partial muse delighted loves to lave;
On her green banks a greener wreath is wove,
To crown the bards that haunt her classic grove;
Where Richards wakes a genuine poet's fires,
And modern Britons justly praise their sires.‖

For me, who, thus unask'd, have dared to tell
My country, what her sons should know too well,

* The "Games of Hoyle," well known to the votaries of whist, chess, &c., are not to be superseded by the vagaries of his poetical namesake, whose poem comprised, as expressly stated in the advertisement, all the "plagues of Egypt."

† This person, who has lately betrayed the most rabid symptoms of confirmed authorship, is writer of a poem denominated the "Art of Pleasing," as "lucus a non lucendo," containing little pleasantry and less poetry. He also acts as monthly stipendiary and collector of calumnies for the "Satirist." If this unfortunate young man would exchange the magazines for the mathematics, and endeavor to take a decent degree in his university, it might eventually prove more serviceable than his present salary.

‡ "Into Cambridgeshire the Emperor Probus transported a considerable body of Vandals."—*Gibbon's Decline and Fall*, page 83, vol. ii. There is no reason to doubt the truth of this assertion; the breed is still in high perfection.

§ Mr. Hodgson's name requires no praise; the man who in translation displays unquestionable genius may well be expected to excel in original composition, of which it is to be hoped we shall soon see a splendid specimen.

‖ The "Aboriginal Britons," an excellent poem by Richards.

Zeal for her honor bade me here engage
The host of idiots that infest her age;
No just applause her honor'd name shall lose,
As first in freedom, dearest to the muse.
Oh! would thy bards but emulate thy fame,
And rise more worthy, Albion, of thy name!
What Athens was in science, Rome in power,
What Tyre appear'd in her meridian hour,
'Tis thine at once, fair Albion! to have been—
Earth's chief dictatress, ocean's mighty queen:
But Rome decay'd, and Athens strew'd the plain,
And Tyre's proud piers lie shatter'd in the main:
Like these, thy strength may sink, in ruin hurl'd,
And Britain fall, the bulwark of the world.
But let me cease, and dread Cassandra's fate,
With warning ever scoff'd at, till too late;
To themes less lofty still my lay confine,
And urge thy bards to gain a name like thine.

Then, hapless Britain! be thy rulers blest,
The senate's oracles, thy people's jest,
Still hear thy motley orators dispense
The flowers of rhetoric, though not of sense,
While Canning's colleagues hate him for his wit,
And old dame Portland fills the place of Pitt.*

Yet once again, adieu! ere this the sail
That wafts me hence is shivering in the gale;
And Afric's coast and Calpe's adverse height,†
And Stamboul's minarets must greet my sight:‡
Thence shall I stray through beauty's native clime,§
Where Kaff is clad in rocks, and crown'd with snows sublime,‖
But should I back return, no letter'd rage
Shall drag my commonplace book on the stage.
Let vain Valentia rival luckless Carr, ¶
And equal him whose work he sought to mar;
Let Aberdeen and Elgin still pursue **
The shade of fame through regions of virtù;
Waste useless thousands on their Phidian freaks,
Misshapen monuments and maim'd antiques;
And make their grand saloons a general mart
For all the mutilated blocks of art.
Of Dardan tours let dilettanti tell,
I leave topography to classic Gell;††

* A friend of mine being asked why his Grace of P. was likened to an old woman, replied, "he supposed it was because he was past bearing."

† Calpe is the ancient name of Gibraltar.

‡ Stamboul is the Turkish word for Constantinople.

§ Georgia, remarkable for the beauty of its inhabitants. ‖ Mt. Caucasus.

¶ Lord Valentia, (whose tremendous travels are forthcoming, with due decorations, graphical, topographical, and typographical,) deposed, on Sir John Carr's unlucky suit, that Dubois's satire prevented his purchase of the "Stranger in Ireland."—Oh, fie, my Lord! has your lordship no more feeling for a fellow-tourist? "But two of a trade," they say, &c.

** Lord Elgin would fain persuade us that all the figures, with and without noses, in his stone-shop, are the work of Phidias; "Credat Judæus!"

†† Mr. Gell's "Topography of Troy and Ithaca" cannot fail to insure the approbation of every man possessed of classical taste, as well for the information Mr. G. conveys to the mind of the reader, as for the ability and research the respective works display.

And, quite content, no more shall interpose
To stun mankind with poesy or prose.

Thus far I've held my undisturb'd career,
Prepared for rancor, steel'd 'gainst selfish fear;
This thing of rhyme I ne'er disdain'd to own—
Though not obtrusive, yet not quite unknown,
My voice was heard again, though not so loud,
My page, though nameless, never disavow'd;
And now at once I tear the veil away:—
Cheer on the pack—the quarry stands at bay,
Unscared by all the din of Melbourne House,
By Lambe's resentment, or by Holland's spouse,
By Jeffrey's harmless pistol, Hallam's rage,
Edina's brawny sons and brimstone page.
Our men in buckram shall have blows enough,
And feel they too "are penetrable stuff:"
And though I hope not hence unscathed to go,
Who conquers me shall find a stubborn foe.
The time hath been, when no harsh sound would fall
From lips that now may seem imbued with gall;
Nor fools nor follies tempt me to despise
The meanest thing that crawl'd beneath my eyes;
But now, so callous grown, so changed since youth,
I've learn'd to think, and sternly speak the truth;
Learn'd to deride the critic's starch decree,
And break him on the wheel he meant for me;
To spurn the rod a scribbler bids me kiss,
Nor care if courts and crowds applaud or hiss:
Nay more, though all my rival rhymesters frown,
I too can hunt a poetaster down;
And, arm'd in proof, the gauntlet cast at once
To Scotch marauder, and to southern dunce.
Thus much I've dared to do; how far my lay
Hath wrong'd these righteous times, let others say:
This, let the world, which knows not how to spare,
Yet rarely blames unjustly, now declare.

POSTSCRIPT.

I HAVE been informed, since the present edition went to the press, that my trusty and well-beloved cousins, the Edinburgh Reviewers, are preparing a most vehement critique on my poor, gentle, *unresisting* Muse, whom they have already so bedevilled with their ungodly ribaldry:

"Tantæne animis cœlestibus iræ."

I suppose I must say of Jeffrey as Sir Andrew Aguecheek saith, "An I had known he was so cunning of fence, I had seen him d——d ere I had fought him." What a pity it is that I shall be beyond the Bosphorus before the next number has passed the Tweed. But I yet hope to light my pipe with it in Persia.

My Northern friends have accused me, with justice, of personality towards their great literary anthropophagus, Jeffrey; but what else was to be done with him and his dirty pack, who feed by "lying and slandering," and slake their thirst by "evil speaking"? I have adduced facts already well known, and of Jeffrey's mind I have stated my free opinion, nor has he thence sustained any injury;—what scavenger was ever soiled by being pelted with mud? It may be said that I quit England because I have censured there "persons of honor and wit about town;" but I am coming back again, and their vengeance will keep hot till my return. Those who know me can testify that my motives for leaving England are very different from fears, literary or personal; those who do not, may one day be convinced. Since the publication of this thing, my name has not been concealed; I have been mostly in London, ready to answer for my transgressions, and in daily expectation of sundry cartels; but, alas! "the age of chivalry is over," or, in the vulgar tongue, there is no spirit nowadays.

There is a youth yclept Hewson Clarke (Subaudi Esquire), a Sizer of Emanuel College, and I believe a denizen of Berwick-upon-Tweed, whom I have introduced in these pages to much better company than he has been accustomed to meet; he is, notwithstanding, a very sad dog, and for no reason that I can discover, except a personal quarrel with a bear, kept by me at Cambridge to sit for a fellowship, and whom the jealousy of his Trinity contemporaries prevented from success, has been abusing me, and, what is worse, the defenceless innocent above mentioned, in the "Satirist," for one year and some months. I am utterly unconscious of having given him any provocation: indeed, I am guiltless of having heard his name till coupled with the "Satirist." He has therefore no reason to complain, and I dare say that, like Sir Fretful Plagiary, he is rather *pleased* than otherwise. I have now mentioned all who have done me the honor to notice me and mine, that is, my bear and my book, except the Editor of the "Satirist," who, it seems, is a gentleman, God wot! I wish he could impart a little of his gentility to his subordinate scribblers. I hear that Mr. Jerningham is about to take up the cudgels for his Mæcenas, Lord Carlisle; I hope not: he was one of the few who, in the very short intercourse I had with him, treated me with kindness when a boy, and whatever he may say or do, "pour on, I will endure." I have nothing further to add, save a general note of thanksgiving to readers, purchasers, and publisher; and, in the words of Scott, I wish

"To all and each a fair good night,
And rosy dreams and slumbers light."

THE WALTZ:

AN APOSTROPHIC HYMN

"Qualis in Eurotæ ripis, aut per juga Cynthi,
Exercet Diana choros." VIRGIL

"Such on Eurotas' banks, or Cynthia's height,
Diana seems: and so she charms the sight,
When in the dance the graceful goddess leads
The quire of nymphs, and overtops their heads."
DRYDEN'S *Virgil.*

TO THE PUBLISHER.

SIR, I am a country gentleman of a midland county. I might have been a parliament-man for a certain borough, having had the offer of as many votes as general T. at the general election in 1812.* But I was all for domestic happiness; as, fifteen years ago, on a visit to London, I married a middle-aged maid of honor. We lived happily at Hornem Hall till last season, when my wife and I were invited by the Countess of Waltzaway (a distant relation of my spouse) to pass the winter in town. Thinking no harm, and our girls being come to a marriageable (or, as they call it, *marketable*) age, and having besides a Chancery suit inveterately entailed upon the family estate, we came up in our old chariot,—of which, by the by, my wife grew so much ashamed in less than a week, that I was obliged to buy a second-hand barouche, of which I might mount the box, Mrs. H. says, if I could drive, but never see the inside—that place being reserved for the Honorable Augustus Tiptoe, her partner-general and opera-knight. Hearing great praises of Mrs. H.'s dancing, (she was famous for birth-night minuets in the latter end of the last century,) I unbooted, and went to a ball at the Countess's, expecting to see a country dance, or, at most, cotillions, reels, and all the old paces to the newest tunes. But judge of my surprise, on arriving, to see poor dear Mrs. Hornem with her arms half round the loins of a huge hussar-looking gentleman I never set eyes on before: and his, to say truth, rather more than half round her waist, turning round, and round, and round, to a d——d see-saw up-and-down sort of tune that reminded me of the "Black Joke," only more *affetuoso*, till it made me quite giddy with wondering they were not so. By and by they stopped a bit, and I thought they would

* State of the poll (last day) 5.

sit or fall down:—but no; with Mrs. H.'s hand on his shoulder, *quam familiariter** (as Terence said when I was at school,) they walked about a minute, and then at it again, like two cockchafers spitted upon the same bodkin. I asked what all this meant, when, with a loud laugh, a child no older than our Wilhelmina, (a name I never heard but in the Vicar of Wakefield, though her mother would call her after the Princess of Swappenbach,) said, "Lord! Mr. Hornem, can't you see they are waltzing!" or waltzing (I forget which); and then up she got, and her mother and sister, and away they went, and roundabouted it till supper-time. Now that I know what it is, I like it of all things, and so does Mrs. H. (though I have broken my shins, and four times overturned Mrs. Hornem's maid, in practising the preliminary steps in a morning.) Indeed, so much do I like it, that having a turn for rhyme, tastily displayed in some election ballads, and songs in honor of all the victories, (but till lately I have had little practice in that way,) I sat down, and with the aid of William Fitzgerald, Esq., and a few hints from Dr. Busby, (whose recitations I attend, and am monstrous fond of Master Busby's manner of delivering his father's late successful "Drury Lane address,") I composed the following hymn, wherewithal to make my sentiments known to the public: whom, nevertheless, I heartily despise, as well as the critics.—I am, sir, yours, &c. &c.,

HORACE HORNEM.

* My Latin is all forgotten, if a man can be said to have forgotten what he never remembered; but I bought my title-page motto of a Catholic priest for a three-shilling bank-token, after much haggling for the *even* sixpence. I grudged the money to a papist, being all for the memory of Perceval and "No popery," and quite regretting the downfall of the pope, because we can't burn him any more.

THE WALTZ.

Muse of the many-twinkling feet! * whose charms
Are now extended up from legs to arms;
Terpsichore!—too long misdeem'd a maid—
Reproachful term—bestow'd but to upbraid—
Henceforth in all the bronze of brightness shine,
The least a vestal of the virgin Nine.
Far be from thee and thine the name of prude;
Mock'd, yet triumphant; sneer'd at, unsubdued;
Thy legs must move to conquer as they fly,
If but thy coats are reasonably high;
Thy breast—if bare enough—requires no shield;
Dance forth—*sans armor* thou shalt take the field,
And own—impregnable to *most* assaults,
Thy not too lawfully begotten "Waltz."

Hail, nimble nymph! to whom the young hussar,
The whisker'd votary of waltz and war,
His night devotes, despite of spur and boots;
A sight unmatch'd since Orpheus and his brutes:
Hail, spirit-stirring Waltz!—beneath whose banners
A modern hero fought for modish manners;
On Hounslow's heath to rival Wellesley's fame,†
Cock'd—fired—and miss'd his man—but gain'd his aim;

* "Glance their many-twinkling feet."—Gray.

† To rival Lord Wellesley's, or his nephew's, as the reader pleases:—the one gained a pretty woman, whom he deserved, by fighting for; and the other has been fighting in the Peninsula many a long day, "by Shrewsbury clock," without gaining anything in *that* country but the title of "the great Lord," and "the Lord;" which savors of profanation, having been hitherto applied only to that Being to whom *Te Deums* for carnage are the rankest blasphemy. It is to be presumed that the general will one day return to his Sabine farm; there

"To tame the genius of the stubborn plain,
Almost as quickly as he conquered Spain!"

The Lord Peterborough conquered continents in a summer; we do more—we contrive both to conquer and lose them in a shorter season. If the "great Lord's" *Cincinnatian* progress in agriculture be no speedier than the proportional average of time in Pope's couplet, it will, according to the farmer's proverb, be "ploughing with dogs."

By the by, one of this illustrious person's new titles is forgotten: it is, however, worth remembering: "*Salvador del mundo!*" *credite, posteri!* If this be the appellation annexed by the inhabitants of the Peninsula to the name of a

Hail, moving Muse! to whom the fair one's breast
Gives all it can, and bids us take the rest.
Oh for the flow of Busby, or of Fitz,
The latter's loyalty, the former's wits,
To "energize the object I pursue,"
And give both Belial and his dance their due!

Imperial Waltz! imported from the Rhine,
(Famed for the growth of pedigrees and wine,)
Long be thine import from all duty free,
And hock itself be less esteem'd than thee:
In some few qualities alike—for hock
Improves our cellar—*thou* our living stock.
The head to hock belongs—thy subtler art
Intoxicates alone the heedless heart:
Through the full veins thy gentler poison swims,
And wakes to wantonness the willing limbs.

O Germany! how much to thee we owe,
As heaven-born Pitt can testify below,
Ere cursed confederation made thee France's,
And only left us thy d——d debts and dances!
Of subsidies and Hanover bereft,
We bless thee still—for George the Third is left!
Of kings the best—and last, not least in worth,
For graciously begetting George the Fourth.
To Germany, and highnesses serene,
Who owe us millions—don't we owe the queen?
To Germany, what owe we not besides?
So oft bestowing Brunswickers and brides:
Who paid for vulgar, with her royal blood,
Drawn from the stem of each Teutonic stud;
Who sent us—so be pardon'd all her faults—
A dozen dukes, some kings, a queen—and Waltz.

But peace to her—her emperor and diet,
Though now transferr'd to Buonaparte's "fiat!"
Back to my theme—O Muse of motion! say,
How first to Albion found thy Waltz her way?

Borne on the breath of hyperborean gales,
From Hamburg's port (while Hamburg yet had sails;
Ere yet unlucky Fame—compell'd to creep—
To snowy Gottenburg—was chill'd to sleep;
Or, starting from her slumbers, deign'd arise,
Heligoland, to stock thy mart with lies;

man who has not yet saved them—query, are they worth saving, even in this world? for, according to the mildest modifications of any Christian creed, those three words make the odds much against them in the next. "Saviour of the world," quotha!—it were to be wished that he, or any one else, could save a corner of it—his country. Yet this stupid misnomer, although it shows the near connection between superstition and impiety, so far has its use, that it proves there can be little to dread from those Catholics (inquisitorial Catholics too) who can confer such an appellation on a *Protestant*. I suppose next year he will be entitled the "Virgin Mary;" if so, Lord George Gordon himself would have nothing to object to such liberal bastards of our Lady of Babylon.

While unburnt Moscow yet had news to send,*
Nor owed her fiery exit to a friend,
She came—Waltz came—and with her certain sets
Of true despatches, and as true gazettes:
Then flamed of Austerlitz the blest despatch,
Which Moniteur nor Morning Post can match;
And—almost crush'd beneath the glorious news—
Ten plays, and forty tales of Kotzebue's:
One envoy's letters, six composers' airs,
And loads from Frankfort and from Leipsic fairs;
Meiner's four volumes upon womankind,
Like Lapland witches to insure a wind;
Brunck's heaviest tome for ballast, and, to back it,
Of Heynè, such as should not sink the packet.

Fraught with this cargo—and her fairest freight,
Delightful Waltz, on tiptoe for a mate,
The welcome vessel reach'd the genial strand,
And round her flock'd the daughters of the land.
Not decent David, when, before the ark,
His grand *pas-seul* excited some remark;
Not love-lorn Quixote, when his Sancho thought
The knight's fandango friskier than it ought:
Not soft Herodias, when, with winning tread,
Her nimble feet danced off another's head;
Not Cleopatra on her galley's deck,
Display'd so much of *leg*, or more of *neck*,
Than thou, ambrosial Waltz, when first the moon
Beheld thee twirling to a Saxon tune!

To you, ye husbands of ten years! whose brows
Ache with the annual tributes of a spouse;
To you of nine years less, who only bear
The budding sprouts of those that you *shall* wear,
With added ornaments around them roll'd
Of native brass, or law-awarded gold;
To you, ye matrons, ever on the watch
To mar a son's, or make a daughter's, match;
To you, ye children of—whom chance accords—
Always the ladies, and *sometimes* their lords;
To you, ye single gentlemen, who seek
Torments for life, or pleasures for a week;

* The patriotic arson of our amiable allies cannot be sufficiently commended—nor subscribed for. Amongst other details omitted in the various despatches of our eloquent ambassador, he did not state (being too much occupied with the exploits of Colonel C——, in swimming rivers frozen, and galloping over roads impassable,) that one entire province perished by famine in the most melancholy manner, as follows:—In General Rostopchin's consummate conflagration, the consumption of tallow and train oil was so great, that the market was inadequate to the demand; and thus one hundred and thirty-three thousand persons were starved to death, by being reduced to wholesome diet. The lamp-lighters of London have since subscribed a pint (of oil) a piece, and the tallow-chandlers have unanimously voted a quantity of the best moulds (four to the pound) to the relief of the surviving Scythians:—the scarcity will soon, by such exertions, and a proper attention to the *quality* rather than the quantity of provision, be totally alleviated. It is said, in return, that the untouched Ukraine has subscribed sixty thousand beeves for a day's meal to our suffering manufacturers.

As Love or Hymen your endeavors guide,
To gain your own, or snatch another's bride;—
To one and all the lovely stranger came,
And every ball-room echoes with her name.

Endearing Waltz!—to thy more melting tune
Bow Irish jig, and ancient jigadoon.
Scotch reels, avaunt! and country-dance, forego
Your future claims to each fantastic toe!
Waltz—Waltz alone—both legs and arms demands,
Liberal of feet, and lavish of her hands;
Hands which may freely range in public sight
Where ne'er before—but—pray "put out the light."
Methinks the glare of yonder chandelier
Shines much too far—or I am much too near;
And true, though strange—Waltz whispers this remark,
"My slippery steps are safest in the dark!"
But here the Muse with due decorum halts,
And lends her longest petticoat to Waltz.

Observant travellers of every time!
Ye quartos publish'd upon every clime!
Oh, say, shall dull Romaika's heavy round,
Fandango's wriggle, or Bolero's bound;
Can Egypt's Almas—tantalizing group—*
Columbia's capercrs to the warlike whoop—
Can aught from cold Kamschatka to Cape Horn
With Waltz compare, or after Waltz be borne?
Ah, no! from Morier's pages down to Galt's,
Each tourist pens a paragraph for "Waltz."

Shades of those belles whose reign began of yore,
With George the Third's—and ended long before!—
Though in your daughters' daughters yet you thrive,
Burst from your lead, and be yourselves alive!
Back to the ball-room speed your spectred host;
Fool's Paradise is dull to that you lost.
No treacherous powder bids conjecture quake;
No stiff-starch'd stays make meddling fingers ache;
(Transferr'd to those ambiguous things that ape
Goats in their visage, women in their shape;) †

* Dancing-girls—who do for hire what Waltz doth gratis.

† It cannot be complained now, as in the Lady Baussiere's time, of the "Sieur de la Croix," that there be "no whiskers;" but how far these are indications of valor in the field, or elsewhere, may *still* be questionable. Much may be, and hath been, avouched on both sides. In the olden time philosophers had whiskers, and soldiers none; Scipio himself was shaven; Hannibal thought his one eye handsome enough without a beard; but Adrian, the emperor, wore a beard, (having warts on his chin, which neither the Empress Sabina nor even the courtiers could abide;) Turenne had whiskers, Marlborough none; Buonaparte is unwhiskered, the Regent whiskered; "*argal*" greatness of mind and whiskers may or may not go together; but certainly the different occurrences, since the growth of the last mentioned, go further in behalf of whiskers than the anathema of Anselm did *against* long hair in the reign of Henry I.—Formerly *red* was a favorite color. See Lodowick Barry's comedy of Ram Alley, 1661, Act i. Sc. i.:—

"*Taffeta.* Now for a wager—What colored beard comes next by the window?

"*Adriana.* A black man's, I think.

"*Taffeta.* I think not so: I think a *red*, for that is most in fashion."

There is "nothing new under the sun;" but *red*, then a *favorite*, has now subsided into a *favorite's* color.

No damsel faints when rather closely press'd,
But more caressing seems when most caress'd;
Superfluous hartshorn and reviving salts,
Both banish'd by the sovereign cordial "Waltz."

Seductive Waltz!—though on thy native shore
Even Werther's self proclaim'd thee half a whore;
Werther—to decent vice though much inclined,
Yet warm, not wanton; dazzled, but not blind—
Though gentle Genlis, in her strife with Staël,
Would even proscribe thee from a Paris ball;
The fashion hails—from countesses to queens,
And maids and valets waltz behind the scenes;
Wide and more wide thy witching circle spreads,
And turns—if nothing else—at least our *heads;*
With thee even clumsy cits attempt to bounce,
And cockneys practise what they can't pronounce.
Gods! how the glorious theme my strain exalts,
And rhyme finds partner rhyme in praise of Waltz!

Blest was the time Waltz chose for her *début;*
The court, the Regent, like herself were new;*
New face for friends, for foes some new rewards;
New ornaments for black and royal guards;
New laws to hang the rogues that roar'd for bread;
New coins (most new) to follow those that fled;†
New victories—nor can we prize them less,
Though Jenky wonders at his own success;
New wars, because the old succeed so well,
That most survivors envy those who fell;
New mistresses—no, old—and yet 'tis true,
Though they be *old*, the *thing* is something new;
Each new, quite new—(except some ancient tricks,)‡
New white-sticks, gold-sticks, broom-sticks, all new sticks!
With vests or ribbons, deck'd alike in hue,
New troopers strut, new turncoats blush in blue;
So saith the muse: my ——, what say you?§
Such was the time when Waltz might best maintain
Her new preferments in this novel reign:

* An anachronism—Waltz and the battle of Austerlitz are before said to have opened the ball together; the bard means, (if he means anything,) Waltz was not so much in vogue till the Regent attained the acme of his popularity. Waltz, the comet, whiskers, and the new government, illuminated heaven and earth, in all their glory, much about the same time; of these the comet only has disappeared; the other three continue to astonish us still.—*Printer's Devil.*

† Amongst others a new ninepence—a creditable coin now forthcoming, worth a pound, in paper, at the fairest calculation.

‡ "Oh that *right* should thus overcome *might!*" Who does not remember the "delicate investigation" in the "Merry Wives of Windsor?"—

"*Ford.* Pray you, come near: if I suspect without cause, why then make sport at me: then let me be your jest; I deserve it. How now? whither bear you this?

"*Mrs. Ford.* What have you to do whither they bear it?—you were best meddle with buck-washing."

§ The gentle, or ferocious, reader may fill up the blank as he pleases—there are several dissyllabic names at his service (being already in the Regent's); it would not be fair to back any peculiar initial against the alphabet, as every month will add to the list now entered for the sweepstakes:—a distinguished consonant is said to be the favorite, much against the wishes of the *knowing ones.*

Such was the time, nor ever yet was such;
Hoops are *no more*, and petticoats *not much;*
Morals and minuets, virtue and her stays,
And tell-tale powder—all have had their days.
The ball begins—the honors of the house
First duly done by daughter or by spouse,
Some potentate—or royal or serene—
With Kent's gay grace, or sapient Glo'ster's mien,
Leads forth the ready dame, whose rising flush
Might once have been mistaken for a blush.
From where the garb just leaves the bosom free,
That spot where hearts were once supposed to be;*
Round all the confines of the yielded waist,
The stranger's hand may wander undisplaced;
The lady's in return may grasp as much
As princely paunches offer to her touch.
Pleased round the chalky floor how well they trip,
One hand reposing on the royal hip;
The other to the shoulder no less royal
Ascending with affection truly loyal!
Thus front to front the partners move or stand,
The foot may rest, but none withdraw the hand;
And all in turn may follow in their rank,
The Earl of—Asterisk—and Lady—Blank;
Sir—Such-a-one—with those of fashion's host,
For whose blest surnames—*vide* Morning Post
(Or if for that impartial print too late,
Search Doctors' Commons six months from my date)—
Thus all and each, in movement swift or slow,
The genial contact gently undergo;
Till some might marvel, with the modest Turk,
If "nothing follows all this palming work." †
True, honest Mirza!—you may trust my rhyme—
Something does follow at a fitter time;
The breast thus publicly resign'd to man
In private may resist him—if it can.

O ye who loved our grandmothers of yore,
Fitzpatrick, Sheridan, and many more!
And thou, my prince! whose sovereign taste and will
It is to love the lovely beldames still!
Thou ghost of Queensbury! whose judging sprite
Satan may spare to peep a single night,
Pronounce—if ever in your days of bliss
Asmodeus struck so bright a stroke as this?
To teach the young ideas how to rise,
Flush in the cheek, and languish in the eyes;

* "We have changed all that," says the Mock Doctor—'tis all gone—Asmodeus knows where. After all, it is of no great importance how women's hearts are disposed of; they have nature's privilege to distribute them as absurdly as possible. But there are also some men with hearts so thoroughly bad, as to remind us of those phenomena often mentioned in natural history, viz., a mass of solid stone—only to be opened by force—and when divided, you find a *toad* in the centre, lively, and with the reputation of being venomous.

† In Turkey a pertinent, here an impertinent and superfluous question—literally put, as in the text, by a Persian to Morier, on seeing a waltz in Pera.—*Vide* Morier's Travels.

Rush to the heart, and lighten through the frame,
With half-told wish and ill-dissembled flame:
For prurient nature still will storm the breast—
Who, tempted thus, can answer for the rest?

But ye—who never felt a single thought
For what our morals are to be, or ought;
Who wisely wish the charms you view to reap,
Say—would you make those beauties quite so cheap?
Hot from the hands promiscuously applied,
Round the slight waist, or down the glowing side,
Where were the rapture then to clasp the form
From this lewd grasp and lawless contact warm?
At once love's most endearing thought resign,
To press the hand so press'd by none but thine;
To gaze upon that eye which never met
Another's ardent look without regret;
Approach the lip which all, without restraint,
Come near enough—if not to touch—to taint;
If such thou lovest—love her then no more,
Or give—like her—caresses to a score;
Her mind with these is gone, and with it go
The little left behind it to bestow.

Voluptuous Waltz! and dare I thus blaspheme?
Thy bard forgot thy praises were his theme.
Terpsichore, forgive!—at every ball
My wife *now* waltzes—and my daughters *shall*;
My son—(or stop—'tis needless to inquire—
These little accidents should ne'er transpire;
Some ages hence our genealogic tree
Will wear as green a bough for him as me)—
Waltzing shall rear, to make our name amends,
Grandsons for me—in heirs to all his friends.

POEMS ON NAPOLEON.

ODE TO NAPOLEON.

"Expende Annibalem:—quot libras in duce summo
Invenies?" JUVENAL, *Sat.* x.

"The Emperor Nepos was acknowledged by the Senate, by the Italians, and by the Provincials of Gaul; his moral virtues, and military talents, were loudly celebrated; and those who derived any private benefit from his government announced in prophetic strains the restoration of public felicity. . . . . By this shameful abdication he protracted his life a few years, in a very ambiguous state, between an Emperor and an Exile, till——."—GIBBON'S *Decline and Fall*, vol. vi. p. 226.

'Tis done—but yesterday a King!
And arm'd with Kings to strive—
And now thou art a nameless thing;
So abject—yet alive!
Is this the man of thousand thrones,
Who strew'd our hearth with hostile bones,
And can he thus survive?
Since he, miscall'd the Morning Star,
Nor man nor fiend hath fallen so far.

Ill-minded man! why scourge thy kind
Who bow'd so low the knee?
By gazing on thyself grown blind,
Thou taught'st the rest to see.
With might unquestion'd—power to save,—
Thine only gift hath been the grave
To those that worshipp'd thee;
Nor till thy fall could mortals guess
Ambition's less than littleness!

Thanks for that lesson—it will teach
To after-warriors more
Than high Philosophy can preach,
And vainly preach'd before.
That spell upon the minds of men
Breaks never to unite again,
That led them to adore
Those Pagod things of sabre sway,
With fronts of brass, and feet of clay.

The triumph, and the vanity,
The rapture of the strife—*

* "Certaminis *gaudia*"—the expression of Attila in his harangue to his army previous to the battle of Chalons, given in Cassiodorus.

The earthquake voice of Victory,
To thee the breath of life;
The sword, the sceptre, and that sway
Which man seem'd made but to obey,
Wherewith renown was rife—
All quell'd!—Dark Spirit! what must be
The madness of thy memory!

The Desolator desolate!
The Victor overthrown!
The Arbiter of others' fate
A Suppliant for his own!
Is it some yet imperial hope
That with such change can calmly cope?
Or dread of death alone?
To die a prince—or live a slave—
Thy choice is most ignobly brave!

He who of old would rend the oak,
Dream'd not of the rebound;
Chain'd by the trunk he vainly broke—
Alone—how look'd he round?
Thou, in the sternness of thy strength,
An equal deed hast done at length,
And darker fate hast found!
He fell the forest prowlers' prey;
But thou must eat thy heart away!

The Roman, when his burning heart
Was slaked with blood of Rome,
Threw down the dagger—dared depart,
In savage grandeur, home—
He dared depart in utter scorn
Of men that such a yoke had borne,
Yet left him such a doom!
His only glory was that hour
Of self-upheld abandon'd power.

The Spaniard, when the lust of sway
Had lost its quickening spell,
Cast crowns for rosaries away,
An empire for a cell;
A strict accountant of his beads,
A subtle disputant on creeds,
His dotage trifled well:
Yet better had he neither known
A bigot's shrine, nor despot's throne.

But thou—from thy reluctant hand
The thunderbolt is wrung—
Too late thou leav'st the high command
To which thy weakness clung;
All Evil Spirit as thou art,
It is enough to grieve the heart
To see thine own unstrung;
To think that God's fair world hath been
The footstool of a thing so mean!

And Earth hath spilt her blood for him,
Who thus can hoard his own!
And Monarchs bow'd the trembling limb,
And thank'd him for a throne!
Fair Freedom! may we hold thee dear,
When thus thy mightiest foes their fear
In humblest guise have shown.
Oh! ne'er may tyrant leave behind
A brighter name to lure mankind!

Thine evil deeds are writ in gore,
Nor written thus in vain—
Thy triumphs tell of fame no more,
Or deepen every stain:
If thou hadst died as honor dies,
Some new Napoleon might arise,
To shame the world again—
But who would soar the solar height,
To set in such a starless night?

Weigh'd in the balance, hero dust
Is vile as vulgar clay;
Thy scales, Mortality! are just
To all that pass away:
But yet methought the living great
Some higher sparks should animate,
To dazzle and dismay;
Nor deem'd Contempt could thus make mirth
Of these, the Conquerors of the earth.

And she, proud Austria's mournful flower,
Thy still imperial bride;
How bears her breast the torturing hour?
Still clings she to thy side?
Must she, too, bend,—must she, too, share,
Thy late repentance, long despair,
Thou throneless Homicide?
If still she loves thee, hoard that gem;
'Tis worth thy vanish'd diadem!

Then haste thee to thy sullen Isle,
And gaze upon the sea;
That element may meet thy smile—
It ne'er was ruled by thee!
Or trace with thine all idle hand,
In loitering mood upon the sand,
That Earth is now as free!
That Corinth's pedagogue hath now
Transferr'd his by-word to thy brow.

Thou Timour! in his captive's cage
What thoughts will there be thine,
While brooding in thy prison'd rage?
But one—"The world *was* mine!"
Unless, like he of Babylon,
All sense is with thy sceptre gone,
Life will not long confine
That spirit pour'd so widely forth—
So long obey'd—so little worth!

Or, like the thief of fire from heaven,
Wilt thou withstand the shock?
And share with him, the unforgiven,
His vulture and his rock?
Foredoom'd by God—by man accurst,
And that last act, though not thy worst,
The very Fiend's arch mock;
He, in his fall preserved his pride,
And, if a mortal, had as proudly died.

ODE FROM THE FRENCH.

I.

We do not curse thee, Waterloo!
Though Freedom's blood thy plain bedew:
There 'twas shed, but is not sunk—
Rising from each gory trunk,
Like the water-spout from ocean,
With a strong and growing motion—
It soars, and mingles in the air,
With that of lost Labedoyère—
With that of him whose honored grave
Contains the "bravest of the brave."
A crimson cloud it spreads and glows,
But shall return to whence it rose:
When 'tis full 'twill burst asunder—
Never yet was heard such thunder,
As then shall shake the world with wonder—
Never yet was seen such lightning
As o'er heaven shall then be bright'ning!
Like the Wormwood Star foretold
By the sainted Seer of old,
Showering down a fiery flood,
Turning rivers into blood.*

II.

The chief has fallen! but not by you,
Vanquishers of Waterloo!
When the soldier-citizen
Sway'd not o'er his fellow-men—
Save in deeds that led them on
Where Glory smiled on Freedom's son—
Who, of all the despots banded,
With that youthful chief competed?
Who could boast o'er France defeated,
Till lone Tyranny commanded?

* See Rev. viii. 7, &c.: "The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood," &c. Ver. 8: "And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood," &c. Ver. 10: "And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters." Ver. 11: "And the name of the star is called *Wormwood*; and the third part of the waters became *wormwood*; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter."

Till, goaded by ambition's sting,
The Hero sunk into the King?
Then he fell;—so perish all,
Who would men by man enthrall!

III.

And thou, too, of the snow-white plume!
Whose realm refused thee even a tomb;
Better hadst thou still been leading
France o'er hosts of hirelings bleeding,
Than sold thyself to death and shame
For a meanly royal name;
Such as he of Naples wears,
Who thy blood-bought title bears,
Little didst thou deem, when dashing
On thy war-horse through the ranks,
Like a stream which bursts its banks,
While helmets cleft, and sabres clashing,
Shone and shiver'd fast around thee—
Of the fate at last which found thee!
Was that haughty plume laid low
By a slave's dishonest blow?
Once—as the moon sways o'er the tide,
It roll'd in air, the warrior's guide;
Through the smoke-created night
Of the black and sulphurous fight,
The soldier raised his seeking eye
To catch that crest's ascendancy—
And as it onward rolling rose,
So moved his heart upon our foes.
There, where death's brief pang was quickest,
And the battle's wreck lay thickest,
Strew'd beneath the advancing banner
Of the eagle's burning crest—
(There with thunder-clouds to fan her,
Who could then her wing arrest—
Victory beaming from her breast?)
While the broken line enlarging
Fell, or fled along the plain;
There be sure was Murat charging!
There he ne'er shall charge again!

IV.

O'er glories gone the invaders march,
Weep Triumph o'er each levell'd arch—
But let Freedom rejoice,
With her heart in her voice;
But her hand on her sword,
Doubly shall she be adored;
France hath twice too well been taught
The "moral lesson" dearly bought—
Her safety sits not on a throne,
With Capet or Napoleon!
But in equal rights and laws,
Hearts and hands in one great cause—

Freedom, such as God hath given
Unto all beneath His heaven,
With their breath, and from their birth,
Though Guilt would sweep it from the earth;
With a fierce and lavish hand
Scattering nations' wealth like sand;
Pouring nations' blood like water,
In imperial seas of slaughter!

V.

But the heart and the mind,
And the voice of mankind,
Shall arise in communion—
And who shall resist that proud union?
The time is past when swords subdued—
Man may die—the soul's renew'd:
Even in this low world of care
Freedom ne'er shall want an heir;
Millions breathe but to inherit
Her for ever bounding spirit—
When once more her hosts assemble,
Tyrants shall believe and tremble—
Smile they at this idle threat?
Crimson tears will follow yet.

TO NAPOLEON.

FROM THE FRENCH.

MUST thou go, my glorious Chief,*
Sever'd from thy faithful few?
Who can tell thy warriors' grief,
Maddening o'er that long adieu?
Woman's love, and friendship's zeal,
Dear as both have been to me—
What are they to all I feel,
With a soldier's faith for thee?

Idol of the soldier's soul!
First in fight, but mightiest now:
Many could a world control:
Thee alone no doom can bow.
By thy side for years I dared
Death; and envied those who fell,
When their dying shout was heard,
Blessing him they served so well.†

Would that I were cold with those,
Since this hour I live to see;
When the doubts of coward foes
Scarce dare trust a man with thee.

* "All wept, but particularly Savary, and a Polish officer, who had been exalted from the ranks by Buonaparte. He clung to his master's knees; wrote a letter to Lord Keith, entreating permission to accompany him, even in the most menial capacity, which could not be admitted."

† "At Waterloo, one man was seen, whose left arm was shattered by a cannon-ball, to wrench it off with the other, and throwing it up in the air, exclaimed to his comrades, 'Vive l'Empereur, jusqu'a la mort!' There were many other instances of the like. This, however, you may depend on as true."—*Private Letter from Brussels.*

Dreading each should set thee free!
Oh! although in dungeons pent,
All their chains were light to me,
Gazing on thy soul unbent.

Would the sycophants of him
Now so deaf to duty's prayer,
Were his borrow'd glories dim,
In his native darkness share?
Were that world this hour his own,
All thou calmly dost resign,
Could he purchase with that throne
Hearts like those which still are thine?

My chief, my king, my friend, adieu!
Never did I droop before;
Never to my sovereign sue,
As his foes I now implore:
All I ask is to divide
Every peril he must brave;
Sharing by the hero's side
His fall, his exile, and his grave.

NAPOLEON'S FAREWELL.

FROM THE FRENCH.

Farewell to the Land, where the gloom of my glory
Arose and o'ershadow'd the earth with her name—
She abandons me now—but the page of her story,
The brightest or blackest, is fill'd with my fame.
I have warr'd with a world which vanquish'd me only
When the meteor of conquest allured me too far;
I have coped with the nations which dread me thus lonely,
The last single Captive to millions in war.

Farewell to thee, France! when thy diadem crown'd me,
I made thee the gem and the wonder of earth,—
But thy weakness decrees I should leave as I found thee,
Decay'd in thy glory, and sunk in thy worth.
Oh! for the veteran hearts that were wasted
In strife with the storm, when their battles were won—
Then the Eagle, whose gaze in that moment was blasted,
Had still soar'd with eyes fix'd on victory's sun!

Farewell to thee, France!—but when Liberty rallies
Once more in thy regions, remember me then—
The violet still grows in the depth of thy valleys;
Though wither'd, thy tears will unfold it again—
Yet, yet I may baffle the hosts that surround us,
And yet may thy heart leap awake to my voice—
There are links which must break in the chain that has bound us,
Then turn thee and call on the Chief of thy choice!

ON THE STAR OF "THE LEGION OF HONOR."

FROM THE FRENCH.

STAR of the brave!—whose beam hath shed
Such glory o'er the quick and dead—
Thou radiant and adored deceit!
Which millions rush'd in arms to greet,—
Wild meteor of immortal birth;
Why rise in heaven to set on Earth!

Souls of slain heroes form'd thy rays;
Eternity flash'd through thy blaze;
The music of thy martial sphere
Was fame on high and honor here:
And thy light broke on human eyes,
Like a volcano of the skies.

Like lava roll'd thy stream of blood,
And swept down empires with its flood;
Earth rock'd beneath thee to her base,
As thou didst lighten through all space;
And the shorn Sun grew dim in air,
And set while thou wert dwelling there.

Before thee rose, and with thee grew,
A rainbow of the loveliest hue
Of three bright colors, each divine,*
And fit for that celestial sign;
For Freedom's hand had blended them,
Like tints in an immortal gem.

One tint was of the sunbeam's dyes;
One, the blue depth of Seraph's eyes:
One, the pure Spirit's veil of white
Had robed in radiance of its light:
The three so mingled did beseem
The texture of a heavenly dream.

Star of the brave! thy ray is pale,
And darkness must again prevail!
But, O thou Rainbow of the free!
Our tears and blood must flow for thee.
When thy bright promise fades away,
Our life is but a load of clay.

And Freedom hallows with her tread
The silent cities of the dead;
For beautiful in death are they
Who proudly fall in her array;
And soon, O Goddess! may we be
For evermore with them or thee!

* The tricolor.

POEMS TO THYRZA.

TO THYRZA.

WITHOUT a stone to mark the spot,
And say, what Truth might well have said,
By all, save one, perchance forgot,
Ah! wherefore art thou lowly laid?

By many a shore and many a sea
Divided, yet beloved in vain!
The past, the future fled to thee,
To bid us meet—no—ne'er again!

Could this have been—a word, a look,
That softly said, "We part in peace,"
Had taught my bosom how to brook,
With fainter sighs, thy soul's release.

And didst thou not, since Death for thee
Prepared a light and pangless dart,
Once long for him thou ne'er shalt see,
Who held, and holds thee in his heart?

Oh! who like him had watch'd thee here?
Or sadly mark'd thy glazing eye,
In that dread hour ere death appear,
When silent sorrow fears to sigh.

Till all was past! But when no more
'Twas thine to reck of human woe,
Affection's heart-drops, gushing o'er,
Had flow'd as fast—as now they flow.

Shall they not flow, when many a day
In these, to me, deserted towers,
Ere call'd but for a time away,
Affection's mingling tears were ours?

Ours too the glance none saw beside;
The smile none else might understand;
The whisper'd thought of hearts allied,
The pressure of the thrilling hand;

The kiss, so guiltless and refined,
That Love each warmer wish forbore;
Those eyes proclaim'd so pure a mind,
Even passion blush'd to plead for more.

The tone, that taught me to rejoice,
When prone, unlike thee, to repine;
The song, celestial from thy voice,
But sweet to me from none but thine;

The pledge we wore—I wear it still,
But where is thine? —Ah! where art thou?
Oft have I borne the weight of ill,
But never bent beneath till now!

Well hast thou left in life's best bloom
The cup of woe for me to drain.
If rest alone be in the tomb,
I would not wish thee here again;

But if in worlds more blest than this
Thy virtues seek a fitter sphere,
Impart some portion of thy bliss,
To wean me from mine anguish here.

Teach me—too early taught by thee!
To bear, forgiving and forgiven:
On earth thy love was such to me;
It fain would form my hope in heaven!

October 11, 1811.

AWAY, AWAY, YE NOTES OF WOE.

Away, away, ye notes of woe!
Be silent, thou once soothing strain,
Or I must flee from hence—for, oh!
I dare not trust those sounds again.
To me they speak of brighter days—
But lull the chords, for now, alas!
I must not think, I may not gaze,
On what I am—on what I was.

The voice that made those sounds more sweet
Is hush'd, and all their charms are fled;
And now their softest notes repeat
A dirge, an anthem o'er the dead!
Yes, Thyrza! yes, they breathe of thee,
Beloved dust! since dust thou art;
And all that once was harmony
Is worse than discord to my heart.

'Tis silent all!—but on my ear
The well-remember'd echoes thrill,
I hear a voice I would not hear,
A voice that now might well be still.
Yet oft my doubting soul 'twill shake;
Even slumber owns its gentle tone,
Till consciousness will vainly wake
To listen, though the dream be flown.

Sweet Thyrza! waking as in sleep,
Thou art but now a lovely dream;
A star that trembled o'er the deep,
Then turn'd from earth its tender beam.

But he who through life's dreary way
Must pass, when heaven is veil'd in wrath,
Will long lament the vanish'd ray
That scatter'd gladness o'er his path

December 6, 1811.

ONE STRUGGLE MORE, AND I AM FREE.

One struggle more, and I am free
From pangs that rend my heart in twain;
One last long sigh to love and thee,
Then back to busy life again.
It suits me well to mingle now
With things that never pleased before,
Though every joy is fled below,
What future grief can touch me more?

Then bring me wine, the banquet bring!
Man was not form'd to live alone:
I'll be that light, unmeaning thing,
That smiles with all, and weeps with none.
It was not thus in days more dear,
It never would have been, but thou
Hast fled, and left me lonely here;
Thou'rt nothing—all are nothing now.

In vain my lyre would lightly breathe!
The smile that sorrow fain would wear
But mocks the woe that lurks beneath,
Like roses o'er a sepulchre.
Though gay companions o'er the bowl
Dispel a while the sense of ill;
Though pleasure fires the maddening soul,
The heart—the heart is lonely still!

On many a lone and lovely night
It soothed to gaze upon the sky;
For then I deem'd the heavenly light
Shone sweetly on thy pensive eye:
And oft I thought at Cynthia's noon,
When sailing o'er the Ægean wave,
"Now Thyrza gazes on that moon—"
Alas, it gleam'd upon her grave!

When stretch'd on fever's sleepless bed,
And sickness shrunk my throbbing veins,
"'Tis comfort still," I faintly said,
"That Thyrza cannot know my pains:"
Like freedom to the time-worn slave,
A boon 'tis idle then to give,
Relenting Nature vainly gave
My life, when Thyrza ceased to live!

My Thyrza's pledge in better days,
When love and life alike were new!
How different now thou meet'st my gaze!
How tinged by time with sorrow's hue!

The heart that gave itself with thee
Is silent—ah, were mine as still!
Though cold as e'en the dead can be,
It feels, it sickens with the chill.

Thou bitter pledge! thou mournful token!
Though painful, welcome to my breast!
Still, still preserve that love unbroken,
Or break the heart to which thou'rt prest!
Time tempers love, but not removes,
More hallow'd when its hope is fled:
Oh! what are thousand living loves
To that which cannot quit the dead?

EUTHANASIA.

When Time, or soon or late, shall bring
The dreamless sleep that lulls the dead,
Oblivion! may thy languid wing
Wave gently o'er my dying-bed!

No band of friends or heirs be there,
To weep or wish the coming blow:
No maiden, with dishevell'd hair,
To feel, or feign, decorous woe.

But silent let me sink to earth,
With no officious mourners near;
I would not mar one hour of mirth,
Nor startle friendship with a tear.

Yet Love, if Love in such an hour
Could nobly check its useless sighs,
Might then exert its latest power
In her who lives and him who dies.

'Twere sweet, my Psyche! to the last
Thy features still serene to see;
Forgetful of its struggles past,
E'en Pain itself should smile on thee.

But vain the wish—for Beauty still
Will shrink, as shrinks the ebbing breath;
And woman's tears, produced at will,
Deceive in life, unman in death.

Then lonely be my latest hour,
Without regret, without a groan;
For thousands Death hath ceased to lower,
And pain been transient or unknown.

"Ay, but to die, and go," alas!
Where all have gone, and all must go,
To be the nothing that I was
Ere born to life and living woe.

Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,
Count o'er thy days from anguish free,
And know, whatever thou hast been,
'Tis something better not to be.

AND THOU ART DEAD, AS YOUNG AS FAIR.

"Heu, quanto minus est cum reliquis versari quam tui meminisse!"

And thou art dead, as young and fair
As aught of mortal birth;
And form so soft, and charms so rare,
Too soon return'd to Earth!
Though earth received them in her bed,
And o'er the spot the crowd may tread
In carelessness or mirth,
There is an eye which could not brook
A moment on that grave to look.

I will not ask where thou liest low,
Nor gaze upon the spot;
There flowers or weeds at will may grow,
So I behold them not:
It is enough for me to prove
That what I loved, and long must love,
Like common earth can rot;
To me there needs no stone to tell,
'Tis nothing that I loved so well.

Yet did I love thee to the last
As fervently as thou,
Who didst not change through all the past,
And canst not alter now.
The love where Death has set his seal,
Nor age can chill, nor rival steal,
Nor falsehood disavow;
And, what were worse, thou canst not see
Or wrong, or change, or fault in me.

The better days of life were ours;
The worst can be but mine:
The sun that cheers, the storm that lowers,
Shall never more be thine.
The silence of that dreamless sleep
I envy now too much to weep;
Nor need I to repine
That all those charms have pass'd away;
I might have watch'd through long decay.

The flower in ripen'd bloom unmatch'd
Must fall the earliest prey;
Though by no hand untimely snatch'd,
The leaves must drop away:
And yet it were a greater grief
To watch it withering, leaf by leaf,
Than see it pluck'd to-day;
Since earthly eye but ill can bear
To trace the change to foul from fair.

I know not if I could have borne
To see thy beauties fade;
The night that follow'd such a morn
Had worn a deeper shade:

Thy day without a cloud hath pass'd,
And thou wert lovely to the last:
Extinguish'd, not decay'd;
As stars that shoot along the sky
Shine brightest as they fall from high.

As once I wept, if I could weep,
My tears might well be shed,
To think I was not near to keep
One vigil o'er thy bed;
To gaze, how fondly! on thy face,
To fold thee in a faint embrace,
Uphold thy drooping head;
And show that love, however vain,
Nor thou nor I can feel again.

Yet how much less it were to gain,
Though thou hast left me free,
The loveliest things that still remain,
Than thus remember thee!
The all of thine that cannot die
Through dark and dread Eternity
Returns again to me,
And more thy buried love endears
Than aught, except its living years.

February, 1812.

IF SOMETIMES IN THE HAUNTS OF MEN.

If sometimes in the haunts of men
Thine image from my breast may fade,
The lonely hour presents again
The semblance of thy gentle shade:
And now that sad and silent hour
Thus much of thee can still restore,
And sorrow unobserved may pour
The plaint she dare not speak before.

Oh, pardon that in crowds a while
I waste one thought I owe to thee,
And, self-condemn'd, appear to smile,
Unfaithful to thy memory!
Nor deem that memory less dear,
That then I seem not to repine;
I would not fools should overhear
One sigh that should be wholly *thine*.

If not the goblet pass unquaff'd,
It is not drain'd to banish care:
The cup must hold a deadlier draught,
That brings a Lethe for despair.
And could Oblivion set my soul
From all her troubled visions free,
I'd dash to earth the sweetest bowl
That drown'd a single thought of thee.

For wert thou vanish'd from my mind,
Where could my vacant bosom turn?
And who would then remain behind
To honor thine abandon'd Urn?
No, no—it is my sorrow's pride
That last dear duty to fulfil;
Though all the world forget beside,
'Tis meet that I remember still.

For well I know that such had been
Thy gentle care for him, who now
Unmourn'd shall quit this mortal scene,
Where none regarded him but thou:
And, oh! I feel in *that* was given
A blessing never meant for me;
Thou wert too like a dream of heaven,
For earthly Love to merit thee.

March 14, 1812.

DOMESTIC PIECES.

FARE THEE WELL.

"Alas! they had been friends in youth;
But whispering tongues can poison truth;
And constancy lives in realms above;
And life is thorny, and youth is vain:
And to be wroth with one we love
Doth work like madness in the brain;

. . . . . .

But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining—
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs, which had been rent asunder;
A dreary sea now flows between,
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been."

COLERIDGE'S *Christabel*

FARE thee well! and if for ever
Still for ever, fare *thee well;*
Even though unforgiving, never
'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.

Would that breast were bared before thee,
Where thy head so oft hath lain,
While that placid sleep came o'er thee
Which thou ne'er canst know again:

Would that breast, by thee glanced over,
Every inmost thought could show!
Then thou wouldst at last discover
'Twas not well to spurn it so.

Though the world for this commend thee—
Though it smile upon the blow,
Even its praises must offend thee,
Founded on another's woe:

Though my many faults defaced me,
Could no other arm be found,
Than the one which once embraced me,
To inflict a cureless wound?

Yet, oh yet, thyself deceive not:
Love may sink by slow decay,
But by sudden wrench, believe not
Hearts can thus be torn away;

Still thine own its life retaineth—
Still must mine, though bleeding, beat:
And the undying thought which paineth
Is—that we no more may meet.

These are words of deeper sorrow
Than the wail above the dead;
Both shall live, but every morrow
Wake us from a widow'd bed.

And when thou would'st solace gather,
When our child's first accents flow,
Wilt thou teach her to say "Father!"
Though his care she must forego?

When her little hands shall press thee,
When her lip to thine is press'd,
Think of him whose prayer shall bless thee,
Think of him thy love had bless'd!

Should her lineaments resemble
Those thou never more mayst see,
Then thy heart will softly tremble
With a pulse yet true to me.

All my faults perchance thou knowest,
All my madness none can know;
All my hopes, where'er thou goest,
Wither, yet with *thee* they go.

Every feeling hath been shaken;
Pride, which not a world could bow,
Bows to thee—by thee forsaken,
Even my soul forsakes me now:

But 'tis done—all words are idle—
Words from me are vainer still;
But the thoughts we cannot bridle
Force their way without the will.

Fare thee well!—thus disunited,
Torn from every nearer tie,
Scar'd in heart, and lone, and blighted,
More than this I scarce can die.

March 17, 1816.

A SKETCH.

"Honest—honest Iago!
If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee."
SHAKSPEARE.

Born in the garret, in the kitchen bred,
Promoted thence to deck her mistress' head;
Next—for some gracious service unexpress'd,
And from its wages only to be guess'd—

Raised from the toilette to the table,—where
Her wondering betters wait behind her chair.
With eye unmoved, and forehead unabash'd,
She dines from off the plate she lately wash'd.
Quick with the tale, and ready with the lie—
The genial confidante, and general spy—
Who could, ye gods! her next employment guess—
An only infant's earliest governess!
She taught the child to read, and taught so well,
That she herself, by teaching, learn'd to spell.
An adept next in penmanship she grows,
As many a nameless slander deftly shows:
What she had made the pupil of her art,
None knew—but that high Soul secured the heart,
And panted for the truth it could not hear,
With longing breast, and undeluded ear.
Foil'd was perversion by that youthful mind,
Which Flattery fooled not—Baseness could not blind,
Deceit infect not—near Contagion soil—
Indulgence weaken—nor Example spoil—
Nor master'd Science tempt her to look down
On humbler talents with a pitying frown—
Nor Genius swell—nor Beauty render vain—
Nor Envy ruffle to retaliate pain—
Nor Fortune change—Pride raise—nor Passion bow,
Nor Virtue teach austerity—till now.
Serenely purest of her sex that live,
But wanting one sweet weakness—to forgive;
Too shock'd at faults her soul can never know,
She deems that all could be like her below:
Foe to all vice, yet hardly Virtue's friend,
For Virtue pardons those she would amend.

But to the theme:—now laid aside too long,
The baleful Burden of this honest song—
Though all her former functions are no more,
She rules the circle which she served before.
If mothers—none know why—before her quake;
If daughters dread her for the mothers' sake;
If early habits—those false links which bind
At times the loftiest to the meanest mind—
Have given her power too deeply to instil
The angry essence of her deadly will;
If like a snake she steal within your walls,
Till the black slime betray her as she crawls;
If like a viper to the heart she wind,
And leave the venom there she did not find;
What marvel that this hag of hatred works
Eternal evil latent as she lurks,
To make a Pandemonium where she dwells,
And reign, the Hecate of domestic hells?
Skill'd by a touch to deepen scandal's tints
With all the kind mendacity of hints,
While mingling truth with falsehood—sneers with smiles—
A thread of candor with a web of wiles;
A plain blunt show of briefly-spoken seeming,

To hide her bloodless heart's soul-harden'd scheming:
A lip of lies—a face form'd to conceal;
And, without feeling, mock at all who feel:
With a vile mask the Gorgon would disown;
A cheek of parchment—and an eye of stone.
Mark, how the channels of her yellow blood
Ooze to her skin, and stagnate there to mud,
Cased like the centipede in saffron mail,
Or darker greenness of the scorpion's scale—
(For drawn from reptiles only may we trace
Congenial colors in that soul or face)—
Look on her features! and behold her mind
As in a mirror of itself defined:
Look on the picture! deem it not o'ercharged—
There is no trait which might not be enlarged:
Yet true to "Nature's journeymen," who made
This monster when their mistress left off trade—
This female dog-star of her little sky,
Where all beneath her influence droop or die.

Oh! wretch without a tear—without a thought,
Save joy above the ruin thou hast wrought—
The time shall come, nor long remote, when thou
Shalt feel far more than thou inflictest now;
Feel for thy vile self-loving self in vain,
And turn thee howling in unpitied pain.
May the strong curse of crush'd affections light
Back on thy bosom with reflected blight!
And make thee in thy leprosy of mind
As loathsome to thyself as to mankind!
Till all thy self-thoughts curdle into hate,
Black—as thy will for others would create:
Till thy hard heart be calcined into dust,
And thy soul welter in its hideous crust.
Oh, may thy grave be sleepless as the bed,—
The widow'd couch of fire, that thou hast spread!
Then, when thou fain wouldst weary Heaven with prayer,
Look on thine earthly victims—and despair!
Down to the dust!—and, as thou rott'st away,
Even worms shall perish on thy poisonous clay.
But for the love I bore, and still must bear,
To her thy malice from all ties would tear—
Thy name—thy human name—to every eye
The climax of all scorn should hang on high,
Exalted o'er thy less abhorr'd compeers—
And festering in the infamy of years.

March 29, 1816.

STANZAS TO AUGUSTA.

When all around grew drear and dark,
And reason half withheld her ray—
And hope but shed a dying spark
Which more misled my lonely way;

In that deep midnight of the mind,
And that internal strife of heart,
When dreading to be deem'd too kind,
The weak despair—the cold depart;

When fortune changed—and love fled far,
And hatred's shafts flew thick and fast,
Thou wert the solitary star
Which rose, and set not to the last.

Oh! blest be thine unbroken light!
That watch'd me as a seraph's eye,
And stood between me and the night,
For ever shining sweetly nigh.

And when the cloud upon us came,
Which strove to blacken o'er thy ray—
Then purer spread its gentle flame,
And dash'd the darkness all away.

Still may thy spirit dwell on mine,
And teach it what to brave or brook—
There 's more in one soft word of thine
Than in the world's defied rebuke.

Thou stood'st, as stands a lovely tree,
That still unbroke, though gently bent,
Still waves with fond fidelity
Its boughs above a monument.

The winds might rend—the skies might pour,
But there thou wert—and still wouldst be
Devoted in the stormiest hour
To shed thy weeping leaves o'er me.

But thou and thine shall know no blight,
Whatever fate on me may fall;
For Heaven in sunshine will requite
The kind—and thee the most of all.

Then let the ties of baffled love
Be broken—thine will never break:
Thy heart can feel—but will not move;
Thy soul, though soft, will never shake.

And these, when all was lost beside,
Were found, and still are fix'd in thee;—
And bearing still a breast so tried,
Earth is no desert—e'en to me.

STANZAS TO AUGUSTA.

THOUGH the day of my destiny 's over,
And the star of my fate hath declined,
Thy soft heart refused to discover
The faults which so many could find;
Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted,
It shrunk not to share it with me,
And the love which my spirit hath painted
It never hath found but in *thee*.

Then when nature around me is smiling,
The last smile which answers to mine,
I do not believe it beguiling,
Because it reminds me of thine;
And when winds are at war with the ocean,
As the breasts I believed in with me,
If their billows excite an emotion,
It is that they bear me from *thee*.

Though the rock of my last hope is shiver'd,
And its fragments are sunk in the wave,
Though I feel that my soul is deliver'd
To pain—it shall not be its slave.
There is many a pang to pursue me:
They may crush, but they shall not contemn—
They may torture, but shall not subdue me—
'Tis of *thee* that I think—not of them.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,
Though woman, thou didst not forsake,
Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,
Though slander'd, thou never couldst shake,—
Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,
Though parted, it was not to fly,
Though watchful, 'twas not to defame me,
Nor, mute, that the world might belie.

Yet I blame not the world, nor despise it,
Nor the war of the many with one—
If my soul was not fitted to prize it,
'Twas folly not sooner to shun:
And if dearly that error hath cost me,
And more than I once could foresee,
I have found that, whatever it lost me,
It could not deprive me of *thee*.

From the wreck of the past, which hath perish'd,
Thus much I at least may recall,
It hath taught me that what I most cherish'd
Deserved to be dearest of all:
In the desert a fountain is springing,
In the wide waste there still is a tree,
And a bird in the solitude singing,
Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*.

July 24, 1816.

EPISTLE TO AUGUSTA.

My sister! my sweet sister! if a name
Dearer and purer were, it should be thine;
Mountains and seas divide us, but I claim
No tears, but tenderness to answer mine:
Go where I will, to me thou art the same—
A loved regret which I would not resign.
There yet are two things in my destiny,—
A world to roam through, and a home with thee.

The first were nothing—had I still the last,
It were the haven of my happiness;
But other claims and other ties thou hast,
And mine is not the wish to make them less.
A strange doom is thy father's son's, and past
Recalling, as it lies beyond redress;
Reversed for him our grandsire's fate of yore,—
He had no rest at sea, nor I on shore.

If my inheritance of storms hath been
In other elements, and on the rocks
Of perils, overlook'd or unforeseen,
I have sustain'd my share of worldly shocks,
The fault was mine; nor do I seek to screen
My errors with defensive paradox;
I have been cunning in mine overthrow,
The careful pilot of my proper woe.

Mine were my faults, and mine be their reward,
My whole life was a contest, since the day
That gave me being, gave me that which marr'd
The gift,—a fate, or will, that walk'd astray;
And I at times have found the struggle hard,
And thought of shaking off my bonds of clay:
But now I fain would for a time survive,
If but to see what next can well arrive.

Kingdoms and empires in my little day
I have outlived, and yet I am not old;
And when I look on this, the petty spray,
Of my own years of trouble, which have roll'd
Like a wild bay of breakers, melts away:
Something—I know not what—does still uphold
A spirit of slight patience;—not in vain,
Even for its own sake, do we purchase pain.

Perhaps the workings of defiance stir
Within me,—or perhaps a cold despair,
Brought on when ills habitually recur,—
Perhaps a kinder clime, or purer air,
(For even to this may change of soul refer,
And with light armor we may learn to bear,)
Have taught me a strange quiet, which was not
The chief companion of a calmer lot.

I feel almost at times as I have felt
In happy childhood; trees, and flowers, and brooks,
Which do remember me of where I dwelt,
Ere my young mind was sacrificed to books,
Come as of yore upon me, and can melt
My heart with recognition of their looks;
And even at moments I could think I see
Some living thing to love—but none like thee.

Here are the Alpine landscapes which create
A fund for contemplation;—to admire
Is a brief feeling of a trivial date;
But something worthier do such scenes inspire.

Here to be lonely is not desolate,
For much I view which I could most desire,
And, above all, a lake I can behold
Lovelier, not dearer, than our own of old.

Oh, that thou wert but with me!—but I grow
The fool of my own wishes, and forget
The solitude which I have vaunted so
Has lost its praise in this but one regret;
There may be others which I less may show;—
I am not of the plaintive mood, and yet
I feel an ebb in my philosophy,
And the tide rising in my alter'd eye.

I did remind thee of our own dear Lake,
By the old Hall which may be mine no more.
Leman's is fair; but think not I forsake
The sweet remembrance of a dearer shore:
Sad havoc Time must with my memory make,
Ere *that* or *thou* can fade these eyes before;
Though, like all things which I have loved, they are
Resign'd for ever, or divided far.

The world is all before me; I but ask
Of Nature that with which she will comply—
It is but in her summer's sun to bask,
To mingle with the quiet of her sky,
To see her gentle face without a mask,
And never gaze on it with apathy.
She was my early friend, and now shall be
My sister—till I look again on thee.

I can reduce all feelings but this one;
And that I would not;—for at length I see
Such scenes as those wherein my life begun.
The earliest—even the only paths for me—
Had I but sooner learnt the crowd to shun,
I had been better than I now can be;
The passions which have torn me would have slept;
I had not suffer'd, and *thou* hadst not wept.

With false Ambition what had I to do?
Little with Love, and least of all with Fame;
And yet they came unsought, and with me grew,
And made me all which they can make—a name.
Yet this was not the end I did pursue;
Surely I once beheld a nobler aim.
But all is over—I am one the more
To baffled millions which have gone before.

And for the future, this world's future may
From me demand but little of my care;
I have outlived myself by many a day;
Having survived so many things that were;
My years have been no slumber, but the prey
Of ceaseless vigils; for I had the share
Of life which might have fill'd a century,
Before its fourth in time had pass'd me by.

And for the remnant which may be to come,
I am content; and for the past I feel
Not thankless,—for within the crowded sum
Of struggles, happiness at times would steal,
And for the present, I would not benumb
My feelings further.—Nor shall I conceal
That with all this I still can look around,
And worship Nature with a thought profound.

For thee, my own sweet sister, in thy heart
I know myself secure, as thou in mine;
We were and are—I am, even as thou art—
Beings who ne'er each other can resign;
It is the same, together or apart,
From life's commencement to its slow decline
We are entwined—let death come slow or fast,
The tie which bound the first, endures the last!

LINES

ON HEARING THAT LADY BYRON WAS ILL.

And thou wert sad—yet I was not with thee!
And thou wert sick, and yet I was not near;
Methought that joy and health alone could be
Where I was *not*—and pain and sorrow here.
And is it thus?—it is as I foretold,
And shall be more so; for the mind recoils
Upon itself, and the wreck'd heart lies cold,
While heaviness collects the shatter'd spoils.
It is not in the storm nor in the strife
We feel benumb'd, and wish to be no more,
But in the after-silence on the shore
When all is lost, except a little life.

I am too well avenged!—but 'twas my right;
Whate'er my sins might be, *thou* wert not sent
To be the Nemesis who should requite—
Nor did Heaven choose so near an instrument.
Mercy is for the merciful!—if thou
Hast been of such, 'twill be accorded now.
Thy nights are banish'd from the realms of sleep!—
Yes! they may flatter thee, but thou shalt feel
A hollow agony which will not heal,
For thou art pillow'd on a curse too deep;
Thou hast sown in my sorrow, and must reap
The bitter harvest in a woe as real!
I have had many foes, but none like thee;
For 'gainst the rest myself I could defend,
And be avenged, or turn them into friend;
But thou in safe implacability
Hadst nought to dread—in thy own weakness shielded,
And in my love, which hath but too much yielded,
And spared, for thy sake, some I should not spare—
And thus upon the world—trust in thy truth—
And the wild fame of my ungovern'd youth—
On things that were not, and on things that are—

Even upon such a basis hast thou built
A monument, whose cement hath been guilt!
The moral Clytemnestra of thy lord,
And hew'd down, with an unsuspected sword,
Fame, peace, and hope—and all the better life
Which, but for this cold treason of thy heart,
Might still have risen from out the grave of strife,
And found a nobler duty than to part.
But of thy virtues didst thou make a vice,
Trafficking with them in a purpose cold,
For present anger, and for future gold—
And buying other's grief at any price.
And thus once enter'd into crooked ways,
The early truth, which was thy proper praise,
Did not still walk beside thee—but at times,
And with a breast unknowing its own crimes,
Deceit, averments incompatible,
Equivocations, and the thoughts which dwell
In Janus-spirits—the significant eye
Which learns to lie with silence—the pretext
Of Prudence, with advantages annex'd—
The acquiescence in all things which tend,
No matter how, to the desired end—
All found a place in thy philosophy.
The means were worthy, and the end is won—
I would not do by thee as thou hast done!

September, 1816.

WELL, THOU ART HAPPY.

Well! thou art happy, and I feel
That I should thus be happy too;
For still my heart regards thy weal
Warmly, as it was wont to do.

Thy husband's blest—and 'twill impart
Some pangs to view his happier lot:
But let them pass—Oh! how my heart
Would hate him if he loved thee not!

When late I saw thy favorite child,
I thought my jealous heart would break;
But when the unconscious infant smiled,
I kiss'd it for its mother's sake.

I kiss'd it,—and repress'd my sighs,
Its father in its face to see;
But then it had its mother's eyes,
And they were all to love and me.

Mary, adieu! I must away:
While thou art blest I'll not repine;
But near thee I can never stay;
My heart would soon again be thine.

I deem'd that time, I deem'd that pride
Had quench'd at length my boyish flame;
Nor knew, till seated by thy side,
My heart in all—save hope—the same.

Yet was I calm: I knew the time
My breast would thrill before thy look;
But now to tremble were a crime—
We met,—and not a nerve was shook.

I saw thee gaze upon my face,
Yet meet with no confusion there;
One only feeling couldst thou trace—
The sullen calmness of despair.

Away! away! my early dream
Remembrance never must awake:
Oh! where is Lethe's fabled stream?
My foolish heart, be still, or break.

November 2, 1816.

THE VISION OF JUDGMENT.

BY QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS.

SUGGESTED BY THE COMPOSITION SO ENTITLED BY THE AUTHOR OF "WAT TYLER."

"A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word."

PREFACE.

It hath been wisely said, that "one fool makes many," and it hath been poetically observed,

"That fools rush in where angels fear to tread."—*Pope.*

If Mr. Southey had not rushed in where he had no business, and where he never was before, and never will be again, the following poem would not have been written. It is not impossible that it may be as good as his own, seeing that it cannot, by any species of stupidity, natural or acquired, be *worse*. The gross flattery, the dull impudence, the renegado intolerance and impious cant, of the poem by the author of "Wat Tyler," are something so stupendous as to form the sublime of himself—containing the quintessence of his own attributes.

So much for his poem—a word on his preface. In this preface it has pleased the magnanimous Laureate to draw the picture of a supposed "Satanic School," the which he doth recommend to the notice of the legislature; thereby adding to his other laurels the ambition of those of an informer. If there exists anywhere, except in his imagination, such a school, is he not sufficiently armed against it by his own intense vanity? The truth is, that there are certain writers whom Mr. S. imagines, like Scrub, to have "talked of *him;* for they laughed consumedly."

I think I know enough of most of the writers to whom he is supposed to allude, to assert, that they, in their individual capacities, have done more good, in the charities of life, to their fellow-creatures in any one year, than Mr. Southey has done harm to himself by his absurdities in his whole life; and this is saying a great deal. But I have a few questions to ask.

1stly, Is Mr. Southey the author of "Wat Tyler"?

2dly, Was he not refused a remedy at law by the highest judge of his beloved England, because it was a blasphemous and seditious publication?

3dly, Was he not entitled by William Smith, in full Parliament, "a rancorous renegado"?

4thly, Is he not Poet Laureate, with his own lines on Martin the regicide staring him in the face?

And, 5thly, Putting the four preceding items together, with what conscience dare *he* call the attention of the laws to the publications of others, be they what they may?

I say nothing of the cowardice of such a proceeding; its meanness speaks for itself; but I wish to touch upon the *motive*, which is neither more nor less than that Mr. S. has been laughed at a little in some recent publications, as he was of yore in the "Anti-Jacobin" by his present patrons. Hence all this "skimble-scamble stuff" about "Satanic," and so forth. However, it is worthy of him—*qualis ab incepto*.

If there is anything obnoxious to the political opinions of a portion of the public in the following poem, they may thank Mr. Southey. He might have written hexameters, as he has written everything else, for aught that the writer cared—had they been upon another subject. But to attempt to canonize a monarch, who, whatever were his household virtues, was neither a successful nor a patriot king,—inasmuch as several years of his reign passed in war with America and Ireland, to say nothing of the aggression upon France,—like all other exaggeration, necessarily begets opposition. In whatever manner he may be spoken of in this new "Vision," his *public* career will not be more favorably transmitted by history. Of his private virtues (although a little expensive to the nation) there can be no doubt.

With regard to the supernatural personages treated of, I can only say that I know as much about them, and (as an honest man) have a better right to talk to them, than Robert Southey. I have also treated them more tolerantly. The way in which that poor insane creature, the Laureate, deals about his judgments in the next world, is like his own judgment in this. If it were not completely ludicrous, it would be something worse. I don't think that there is much more to say at present. QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS.

P. S.—It is possible that some readers may object, in these objectionable times, to the freedom with which saints, angels, and spiritual persons discourse in this "Vision." But, for precedents upon such points, I must refer them to Fielding's "Journey from this World to the next," and to the Visions of myself, the said Quevedo, in Spanish or translated. The reader is also requested to observe that no doctrinal tenets are insisted upon or discussed; that the person of the Deity is carefully withheld from sight, which is more than can be said for the Laureate, who hath thought proper to make Him talk, not "like a school divine," but like the unscholarlike Mr. Southey. The whole action passes on the outside of heaven; and Chaucer's "Wife of Bath," Pulci's "Morgante Maggiore," Swift's "Tale of a Tub," and the other works above referred to, are cases in point of the freedom with which saints, &c., may be permitted to converse in works not intended to be serious.—Q. R.

*** Mr. Southey, being, as he says, a good Christian and vindictive, threatens, I understand, a reply to this our answer. It is to be hoped that his visionary faculties will in the meantime have acquired a little more judgment, properly so called: otherwise he will get himself into new dilemmas. These apostate Jacobins furnish rich rejoinders. Let him take a specimen. Mr. Southey

laudeth grievously "one Mr. Landor," who cultivates much private renown in the shape of Latin verses; and not long ago, the Poet Laureate dedicated to him, it appeareth, one of his fugitive lyrics upon the strength of a poem called *Gebir*. Who could suppose that in this same *Gebir* the aforesaid Savage Landor (for such is his grim cognomen) putteth into the infernal regions no less a person than the hero of his friend Mr. Southey's heaven,—yea, even George the Third! See also how personal Savage becometh, when he hath a mind. The following is his portrait of our late gracious sovereign:

(Prince Gebir having descended into the infernal regions, the shades of his royal ancestors are, at his request, called up to his view; and he exclaims to his ghostly guide):

> "Arvar, what wretch that nearest us? what wretch
> Is that with eyebrows white and slanting brow?
> Listen! him yonder, who, bound down supine,
> Shrinks yelling from that sword there, engine-hung!
> He too amongst my ancestors? I hate
> The despot, but the dastard I despise.
> Was he our countryman?"
>
> "Alas, O king!
> Iberia bore him, but the breed accurst
> Inclement winds blew blighting from north-east."
> "He was a warrior then, nor fear'd the gods?"
> "Gebir, he fear'd the demons, not the gods,
> Though them indeed his daily face adored;
> And was no warrior, yet the thousand lives
> Squander'd, as stones to exercise a sling,
> And the tame cruelty and cold caprice—
> Oh, madness of mankind! address'd, adored!"—
>
> *Gebir*, p. 28.

THE VISION OF JUDGMENT.

I.

SAINT PETER sat by the celestial gate:
His keys were rusty, and the lock was dull,
So little trouble had been given of late;
Not that the place by any means was full,
But since the Gallic era "eighty-eight,"
The devils had ta'en a longer, stronger pull
And "a pull altogether," as they say
At sea—which drew most souls another way.

II.

The angels all were singing out of tune,
And hoarse with having little else to do,
Excepting to wind up the sun and moon,
Or curb a runaway young star or two,
Or wild colt of a comet, which too soon
Broke out of bounds o'er the ethereal blue,
Splitting some planet with its playful tail,
As boats are sometimes by a wanton whale.

III.

The guardian seraphs had retired on high,
Finding their charges past all care below;
Terrestrial business fill'd nought in the sky
Save the recording angel's black bureau;
Who found, indeed, the facts to multiply
With such rapidity of vice and woe,
That he had stripp'd off both his wings in quills,
And yet was in arrear of human ills.

IV.

His business so augmented of late years,
That he was forced, against his will no doubt,
(Just like those cherubs, earthly ministers,)
For some resource to turn himself about,
And claim the help of his celestial peers,
To aid him ere he should be quite worn out,
By the increased demand for his remarks;
Six angels and twelve saints were named his clerks.

v.

This was a handsome board—at least for heaven;
And yet they had even then enough to do,
So many conquerors' cars were daily driven,
So many kingdoms fitted up anew;
Each day too slew its thousands six or seven,
Till at the crowning carnage, Waterloo,
They threw their pens down in divine disgust—
The page was so besmear'd with blood and dust.

VI.

This by the way! 'tis not mine to record
What angels shrink from: even the very devil
On this occasion his own work abhorr'd,
So surfeited with the infernal revel:
Though he himself had sharpen'd every sword,
It almost quench'd his innate thirst of evil.
(Here Satan's sole good work deserves insertion—
'Tis, that he has both generals in reversion.)

VII.

Let 's skip a few short years of hollow peace,
Which peopled earth no better, hell as wont,
And heaven none—they form the tyrant's lease,
With nothing but new names subscribed upon't:
'Twill one day finish: meantime they increase,
"With seven heads and ten horns," and all in front,
Like Saint John's foretold beast? but ours are born
Less formidable in the head than horn.

VIII.

In the first year of freedom's second dawn
Died George the Third; although no tyrant, one
Who shielded tyrants, till each sense withdrawn
Left him nor mental nor external sun:
A better farmer ne'er brush'd dew from lawn,
A worse king never left a realm undone!
He died—but left his subjects still behind,
One half as mad—and t'other no less blind.

IX.

He died!—his death made no great stir on earth;
His burial made some pomp; there was profusion
Of velvet, gilding, brass, and no great dearth
Of aught but tears—save those shed by collusion.
For these things may be bought at their true worth;
Of elegy there was the due infusion—
Bought also; and the torches, cloaks, and banners,
Heralds, and relics of old Gothic manners,

X.

Form'd a sepulchral melodrame. Of all
The fools who flock'd to swell or see the show,
Who cared about the corpse? The funeral
Made the attraction, and the black the woe.

There throbb'd not there a thought which pierced the pall;
And when the gorgeous coffin was laid low,
It seem'd the mockery of hell to fold
The rottenness of eighty years in gold.

XI.

So mix his body with the dust! It might
Return to what it *must* far sooner, were
The natural compound left alone to fight
Its way back into earth, and fire, and air;
But the unnatural balsams merely blight
What nature made him at his birth, as bare
As the mere million's base unmummied clay—
Yet all his spices but prolong decay.

XII.

He's dead—and upper earth with him has done;
He's buried; save the undertaker's bill,
Or lapidary scrawl, the world is gone
For him, unless he left a German will;
But where's the proctor who will ask his son?
In whom his qualities are reigning still,
Except that household virtue, most uncommon,
Of constancy to a bad, ugly woman.

XIII.

"God save the king!" It is a large economy
In God to save the like; but if He will
Be saving, all the better; for not one am I
Of those who think damnation better still:
I hardly know too if not quite alone am I
In this small hope of bettering future ill
By circumscribing, with some slight restriction,
The eternity of hell's hot jurisdiction.

XIV.

I know this is unpopular; I know
'Tis blasphemous; I know one may be damn'd
For hoping no one else may e'er be so;
I know my catechism; I know we are cramm'd
With the best doctrines till we quite o'erflow;
I know that all save England's church have shamm'd;
And that the other twice two hundred churches
And synagogues have made a *damn'd* bad purchase.

XV.

God help us all! God help me too! I am,
God knows, as helpless as the devil can wish,
And not a whit more difficult to damn,
Than is to bring to land a late-hook'd fish,
Or to the butcher to purvey the lamb;
Not that I'm fit for such a noble dish,
As one day will be that immortal fry
Of almost everybody born to die.

XVI.

Saint Peter sat by the celestial gate,
And nodded o'er his keys; when, lo! there came
A wondrous noise he had not heard of late—
A rushing sound of wind, and stream, and flame;
In short, a roar of things extremely great,
Which would have made aught save a saint exclaim;
But he, with first a start and then a wink,
Said, "There's another star gone out, I think!"

XVII.

But ere he could return to his repose,
A cherub flapp'd his right wing o'er his eyes—
At which Saint Peter yawn'd, and rubb'd his nose:
"Saint porter," said the Angel, "prithee rise!"
Waving a goodly wing, which glow'd, as glows
An earthly peacock's tail, with heavenly dyes;
To which the Saint replied, "Well, what's the matter?
Is Lucifer come back with all this clatter?"

XVIII.

"No," quoth the cherub; "George the Third is dead."
"And who *is* George the Third?" replied the apostle.
"*What George? what Third?*" "The king of England," said
The angel. "Well! he won't find kings to jostle
Him on his way; but does he wear his head?
Because the last we saw here had a tussle,
And ne'er would have got into heaven's good graces,
Had he not flung his head in all our faces.

XIX.

"He was, if I remember, king of France;
That head of his, which could not keep a crown
On earth, yet ventured in my face to advance
A claim to those of martyrs—like my own:
If I had had my sword, as I had once
When I cut ears off, I had cut him down;
But having but my *keys*, and not my brand,
I only knock'd his head from out his hand.

XX.

"And then he set up such a headless howl,
That all the saints came out and took him in;
And there he sits by Saint Paul, cheek by jowl;
That fellow Paul—the parvenu! The skin
Of Saint Bartholomew, which makes his cowl
In heaven, and upon earth redeem'd his sin,
So as to make a martyr, never sped
Better than did this weak and wooden head.

XXI.

"But had it come up here upon its shoulders,
There would have been a different tale to tell;
The fellow-feeling in the saints beholders
Seems to have acted on them like a spell;

And so this very foolish head heaven solders
Back on its trunk: it may be very well,
And seems the custom here to overthrow
Whatever has been wisely done below."

XXII.

The angel answer'd: "Peter: do not pout:
The king who comes has head and all entire,
And never knew much what it was about—
He did as doth the puppet—by its wire,
And will be judged like all the rest, no doubt:
My business and your own is not to inquire
Into such matters, but to mind our cue—
Which is to act as we are bid to do."

XXIII.

While thus they spake, the angelic caravan,
Arriving like a rush of mighty wind,
Cleaving the fields of space, as doth the swan
Some silver stream (say Ganges, Nile, or Inde,
Or Thames, or Tweed), and 'midst them an old man
With an old soul, and both extremely blind,
Halted before the gate, and in his shroud
Seated their fellow-traveller on a cloud.

XXIV.

But bringing up the rear of this bright host,
A Spirit of a different aspect waved
His wings, like thunder-clouds above some coast
Whose barren beach with frequent wrecks is paved;
His brow was like the deep when tempest-toss'd;
Fierce and unfathomable thoughts engraved
Eternal wrath on his immortal face,
And *where* he gazed a gloom pervaded space.

XXV.

As he drew near, he gazed upon the gate
Ne'er to be enter'd more by him or Sin,
With such a glance of supernatural hate,
As made Saint Peter wish himself within;
He patter'd with his keys at a great rate,
And sweated through his apostolic skin:
Of course his perspiration was but ichor,
Or some such other spiritual liquor.

XXVI.

The very cherubs huddled all together,
Like birds when soars the falcon; and they felt
A tingling to the tip of every feather,
And form'd a circle like Orion's belt
Around their poor old charge; who scarce knew whither
His guards had led him, though they gently dealt
With royal manes (for by many stories,
And true, we learn the angels are all Tories).

XXVII.

As things were in this posture, the gate flew
  Asunder, and the flashing of its hinges
Flung over space an universal hue
  Of many-color'd flame, until its tinges
Reach'd even our speck of earth, and made a new
  Aurora borealis spread its fringes
O'er the North Pole; the same seen, when ice-bound,
By Captain Parry's crew, in "Melville's Sound."

XXVIII.

And from the gate thrown open issued beaming
  A beautiful and mighty Thing of Light,
Radiant with glory, like a banner streaming
  Victorious from some world-o'erthrowing fight:
My poor comparisons must needs be teeming
  With earthly likenesses, for here the night
Of clay obscures our best conceptions, saving
Johanna Southcote, or Bob Southey raving.

XXIX.

'Twas the archangel Michael: all men know
  The make of angels and archangels, since
There's scarce a scribbler has not one to show,
  From the fiends' leader to the angels' prince.
There also are some altar-pieces, though
  I really can't say that they much evince
One's inner notions of immortal spirits;
But let the connoisseurs explain *their* merits.

XXX.

Michael flew forth in glory and in good,
  A goodly work of Him from whom all glory
And good arise; the portal past—he stood;
  Before him the young cherubs and saints hoary—
(I say *young*, begging to be understood
  By looks, not years, and should be very sorry
To state, they were not older than Saint Peter,
But merely that they seem'd a little sweeter.)

XXXI.

The cherubs and the saints bow'd down before
  That archangelic hierarch, the first
Of essences angelical, who wore
  The aspect of a god; but this ne'er nursed
Pride in his heavenly bosom, in whose core
  No thought, save for his Maker's service, durst
Intrude, however glorified and high;
He knew him but the viceroy of the sky.

XXXII.

He and the sombre silent Spirit met—
  They knew each other both for good and ill;
Such was their power, that neither could forget
  His former friend and future foe; but still

There was a high, immortal, proud regret
In either's eye, as if 'twere less their will
Than destiny to make the eternal years
Their date of war, and their "champ clos" the spheres

XXXIII.

But here they were in neutral space: we know
From Job, that Satan hath the power to pay
A heavenly visit thrice a year or so;
And that "the sons of God," like those of clay,
Must keep him company; and we might show
From the same book, in how polite a way
The dialogue is held between the Powers
Of Good and Evil—but 'twould take up hours.

XXXIV.

And this is not a theologic tract,
To prove with Hebrew and with Arabic,
If Job be allegory or a fact,
But a true narrative; and thus I pick
From out the whole but such and such an act,
As sets aside the slightest thought of trick.
'Tis every tittle true, beyond suspicion,
And accurate as any other vision.

XXXV.

The spirits were in neutral space, before
The gate of heaven; like Eastern thresholds is
The place where Death's grand cause is argued o'er,
And souls dispatch'd to that world or to this;
And therefore Michael and the other wore
A civil aspect: though they did not kiss,
Yet still between his Darkness and his Brightness
There pass'd a mutual glance of great politeness.

XXXVI.

The Archangel bow'd, not like a modern beau,
But with a graceful Oriental bend,
Pressing one radiant arm just where below
The heart in good men is supposed to tend.
He turn'd as to an equal, not too low,
But kindly; Satan met his ancient friend
With more hauteur, as might an old Castilian
Poor noble meet a mushroom rich civilian.

XXXVII.

He merely bent his diabolic brow
An instant; and then raising it, he stood
In act to assert his right or wrong, and show
Cause why King George by no means could or should
Make out a case to be exempt from woe
Eternal, more than other kings, endued
With better sense and hearts, whom history mentions
Who long have "paved hell with their good intentions." *

* "No saint in the course of his religious warfare was more sensible of the unhappy failure of pious resolves than Dr. Johnson: he said one day, talking to an acquaintance on this subject, 'Sir, hell is paved with good intentions.'"

XXXVIII.

Michael began: "What wouldst thou with this man,
Now dead, and brought before the Lord? What ill
Hath he wrought since his mortal race began,
That thou canst claim him? Speak! and do thy will,
If it be just: if in this earthly span
He hath been greatly failing to fulfil
His duties as a king and mortal, say,
And he is thine; if not, let him have way."

XXXIX.

"Michael!" replied the Prince of Air, "even here,
Before the gate of Him thou servest, must
I claim my subject: and will make appear
That as he was my worshipper in dust,
So shall he be in spirit, although dear
To thee and thine, because nor wine nor lust
Were of his weaknesses, yet on the throne
He reign'd o'er millions to serve me alone.

XL.

"Look to *our* earth, or rather *mine:* it was,
Once, more thy Master's: but I triumph not
In this poor planet's conquest; nor, alas!
Need He thou servest envy me my lot:
With all the myriads of bright worlds which pass
In worship round Him, He may have forgot
Yon weak creation of such paltry things:
I think few worth damnation save their kings—

XLI.

"And these but as a kind of quit-rent, to
Assert my right as lord; and even had
I such an inclination, 'twere (as you
Well know) superfluous; they are grown so bad,
That hell has nothing better left to do
Than leave them to themselves! so much more mad
And evil by their own internal curse,
Heaven cannot make them better, nor I worse.

XLII.

"Look to the earth, I said, and say again:
When this old, blind, mad, helpless, weak, poor worm
Began in youth's first bloom and flush to reign,
The world and he both wore a different form,
And much of earth and all the watery plain
Of ocean call'd him king: through many a storm
His isles had floated on the abyss of time;
For the rough virtues chose them for their clime.

XLIII.

"He came to his sceptre young; he leaves it old:
Look to the state in which he found his realm,
And left it; and his annals too behold,
How to a minion first he gave the helm;

How grew upon his heart a thirst for gold,
The beggar's vice, which can but overwhelm
The meanest hearts! and for the rest, but glance
Thine eye along America and France.

XLIV.

"'Tis true, he was a tool from first to last
(I have the workmen safe); but as a tool
So let him be consumed. From out the past
Of ages, since mankind have known the rule
Of monarchs—from the bloody rolls amass'd
Of sin and slaughter—from the Cæsars' school
Take the worst pupil; and produce a reign
More drench'd with gore, more cumber'd with the slain.

XLV.

"He ever warr'd with freedom and the free:
Nations as men, home subjects, foreign foes,
So that they utter'd the word 'Liberty!'
Found George the Third their first opponent. Whose
History was ever stain'd as his will be
With national and individual woes?
I grant his household abstinence; I grant
His neutral virtues, which most monarchs want;

XLVI.

"I know he was a constant consort; own
He was a decent sire, and middling lord.
All this is much, and most upon a throne;
As temperance, if at Apicius' board,
Is more than at an anchorite's supper shown.
I grant him all the kindest can accord;
And this was well for him, but not for those
Millions who found him what oppression chose.

XLVII.

"The New World shook him off; the Old yet groans
Beneath what he and his prepared, if not
Completed: he leaves heirs on many thrones
To all his vices, without what begot
Compassion for him—his tame virtues; drones
Who sleep, or despots who have now forgot
A lesson which shall be retaught them, wake
Upon the thrones of earth; but let them quake!

XLVIII.

"Five millions of the primitive, who hold
The faith which makes ye great on earth, implored
A *part* of that vast *all* they held of old,—
Freedom to worship—not alone your Lord,
Michael, but you, and you, Saint Peter! Cold
Must be your souls, if you have not abhorr'd
The foe to Catholic participation
In all the license of a Christian nation.

XLIX.

"True! he allow'd them to pray God: but as
A consequence of prayer, refused the law
Which would have placed them upon the same base
With those who did not hold the saints in awe."
But here Saint Peter started from his place,
And cried, "You may the prisoner withdraw;
Ere heaven shall ope her portals to this Guelph,
While I am guard, may I be damn'd myself!

L.

"Sooner will I with Cerberus exchange
My office (and *his* is no sinecure)
Than see this royal Bedlam bigot range
The azure fields of heaven, of that be sure!"
"Saint!" replied Satan, "you do well to avenge
The wrongs he made your satellites endure;
And if to this exchange you should be given,
I'll try to coax *our* Cerberus up to heaven."

LI.

Here Michael interposed: "Good saint! and devil!
Pray, not so fast; you both outrun discretion.
Saint Peter! you were wont to be more civil:
Satan! excuse this warmth of his expression,
And condescension to the vulgar's level:
Even saints sometimes forget themselves in session.
Have you got more to say?"—"No."—"If you please
I'll trouble you to call your witnesses."

LII.

Then Satan turn'd and waved his swarthy hand,
Which stirr'd with its electric qualities
Clouds farther off than we can understand,
Although we find him sometimes in our skies;
Infernal thunder shook both sea and land
In all the planets, and hell's batteries
Let off the artillery, which Milton mentions
As one of Satan's most sublime inventions.

LIII.

This was a signal unto such damn'd souls
As have the privilege of their damnation
Extended far beyond the mere controls
Of worlds past, present, or to come; no station
Is theirs particularly in the rolls
Of hell assign'd; but where their inclination
Or business carries them in search of game,
They may range freely—being damn'd the same.

LIV.

They are proud of this—as very well they may,
It being a sort of knighthood, or gilt key
Stuck in their loins; or like to an *entré*
Up the back stairs, or such freemasonry.

I borrow my comparisons from clay,
Being clay myself. Let not those spirits be
Offended with such base low likenesses;
We know their posts are nobler far than these.

LV.

When the great signal ran from heaven to hell—
About ten million times the distance reckon'd
From our sun to its earth, as we can tell
How much time it takes up, even to a second,
For every ray that travels to dispel
The fogs of London, through which, dimly beacon'd
The weathercocks are gilt some thrice a year,
If that the *summer* is not too severe.

LVI.

I say that I can tell—'twas half a minute:
I know the solar beams take up more time
Ere, pack'd up for their journey, they begin it;
But then their telegraph is less sublime,
And if they ran a race, they would not win it
'Gainst Satan's couriers bound for their own clime.
The sun takes up some years for every ray
To reach its goal—the devil not half a day.

LVII.

Upon the verge of space, about the size
Of half-a-crown, a little speck appear'd
(I've seen a something like it in the skies
In the Ægean, ere a squall); it near'd,
And, growing bigger, took another guise;
Like an aërial ship, it tack'd and steer'd,
Or *was* steer'd (I am doubtful of the grammar
Of the last phrase, which makes the stanza stammer;—

LVIII.

But take your choice); and then it grew a cloud;
And so it was—a cloud of witnesses.
But such a cloud! No land e'er saw a crowd
Of locusts numerous as the heavens saw these;
They shadow'd with their myriads space; their loud
And varied cries were like those of wild geese
(If nations may be liken'd to a goose),
And realized the phrase of "hell broke loose."

LIX.

Here crash'd a sturdy oath of stout John Bull,
Who damn'd away his eyes as heretofore:
There Paddy brogued "By Jasus!"—"What's your wull?"
The temperate Scot exclaim'd: the French ghost swore
In certain terms I shan't translate in full,
As the first coachman will; and 'midst the war,
The voice of Jonathan was heard to express,
"*Our* president is going to war, I guess."

LX.

Besides, there were the Spaniard, Dutch, and Dane;
In short, an universal shoal of shades,
From Otaheite's isle to Salisbury Plain,
Of all climes and professions, years and trades,
Ready to swear against the good king's reign,
Bitter as clubs in cards are against spades:
All summon'd by this grand "subpœna," to
Try if kings mayn't be damn'd like me or you.

LXI.

When Michael saw this host, he first grew pale,
As angels can; next, like Italian twilight,
He turn'd all colors—as a peacock's tail,
Or sunset streaming through a Gothic skylight
In some old abbey, or a trout not stale,
Or distant lightning on the horizon *by* night,
Or a fresh rainbow, or a grand review
Of thirty regiments in red, green, and blue.

LXII.

Then he address'd himself to Satan: "Why,
My good old friend—for such I deem you, though
Our different parties make us fight so shy,
I ne'er mistake you for a *personal* foe;
Our difference is *political*, and I
Trust that, whatever may occur below,
You know my great respect for you: and this
Makes me regret whate'er you do amiss—

LXIII.

"Why, my dear Lucifer, would you abuse
My call for witnesses? I did not mean
That you should half of earth and hell produce;
'Tis even superfluous, since two honest, clean,
True testimonies are enough: we lose
Our time, nay, our eternity, between
The accusation and defence: if we
Hear both, 'twill stretch our immortality."

LXIV.

Satan replied: "To me the matter is
Indifferent, in a personal point of view:
I can have fifty better souls than this
With far less trouble than we have gone through
Already; and I merely argued his
Late Majesty of Britain's case with you
Upon a point of form: you may dispose
Of him; I've kings enough below, God knows!"

LXV.

Thus spoke the Demon (late call'd "multifaced"
By multo-scribbling Southey). "Then we'll call
One or two persons of the myriads placed
Around our congress, and dispense with all

The rest," quoth Michael: "Who may be so graced
As to speak first? there's choice enough—who shall
It be?" Then Satan answer'd, "There are many;
But you may choose Jack Wilkes as well as any."

LXVI.

A merry, cock-eyed, curious-looking sprite
Upon the instant started from the throng,
Dress'd in a fashion now forgotten quite;
For all the fashions of the flesh stick long
By people in the next world; where unite
All the costumes since Adam's, right or wrong,
From Eve's fig-leaf down to the petticoat,
Almost as scanty, of days less remote.

LXVII.

The spirit look'd around upon the crowds
Assembled, and exclaim'd: "My friends of all
The spheres, we shall catch cold amongst these clouds:
So let's to business: why this general call?
If those are freeholders I see in shrouds,
And 'tis for an election that they bawl,
Behold a candidate with unturn'd coat!
Saint Peter, may I count upon your vote?"

LXVIII.

"Sir," replied Michael, "you mistake; these things
Are of a former life, and what we do
Above is more august; to judge of kings
Is the tribunal met: so now you know."
"Then I presume those gentlemen with wings,"
Said Wilkes, "are cherubs; and that soul below
Looks much like George the Third, but to my mind
A good deal older—Bless me! is he blind?"

LXIX.

"He is what you behold him, and his doom
Depends upon his deeds," the Angel said.
"If you have aught to arraign in him, the tomb
Gives license to the humblest beggar's head
To lift itself against the loftiest."—"Some,"
Said Wilkes, "don't wait to see them laid in lead
For such a liberty—and I, for one,
Have told them what I thought beneath the sun."

LXX.

"*Above* the sun repeat, then, what thou hast
To urge against him," said the Archangel. "Why,"
Replied the spirit, "since old scores are past,
Must I turn evidence? In faith, not I.
Besides, I beat him hollow at the last,
With all his Lords and Commons: in the sky
I don't like ripping up old stories, since
His conduct was but natural in a prince.

LXXI.

"Foolish, no doubt, and wicked, to oppress
A poor unlucky devil without a shilling;
But then I blame the man himself much less
Than Bute and Grafton, and shall be unwilling
To see him punish'd here for their excess,
Since they were both damn'd long ago, and still in
Their place below: for me, I have forgiven,
And vote his 'habeas corpus' into heaven."

LXXII.

"Wilkes," said the Devil, "I understand all this;
You turn'd to half a courtier ere you died,
And seem to think it would not be amiss
To grow a whole one on the other side
Of Charon's ferry; you forget that *his*
Reign is concluded; whatsoe'er betide,
He won't be sovereign more: you've lost your labor,
For at the best he will but be your neighbor.

LXXIII.

"However, I knew what to think of it,
When I beheld you in your jesting way,
Flitting and whispering round about the spit
Where Belial, upon duty for the day,
With Fox's lard was basting William Pitt,
His pupil; I knew what to think, I say:
That fellow even in hell breeds further ills;
I'll have him *gagg'd*—'twas one of his own bills.

LXXIV.

"Call Junius!" From the crowd a shadow stalk'd,
And at the name there was a general squeeze,
So that the very ghosts no longer walk'd
In comfort, at their own aërial ease,
But were all ramm'd, and jamm'd (but to be balk'd,
As we shall see), and jostled hands and knees,
Like wind compress'd and pent within a bladder,
Or like a human colic, which is sadder.

LXXV.

The shadow came—a tall, thin, gray-hair'd figure,
That look'd as it had been a shade on earth;
Quick in its motions, with an air of vigor,
But nought to mark its breeding or its birth:
Now it wax'd little, then again grew bigger,
With now an air of gloom, or savage mirth;
But as you gazed upon its features, they
Changed every instant—to *what*, none could say.

LXXVI.

The more intently the ghosts gazed, the less
Could they distinguish whose the features were;
The Devil himself seem'd puzzled even to guess;
They varied like a dream—now here, now there;

And several people swore, from out the press,
They knew him perfectly: and one could swear
He was his father: upon which another
Was sure he was his mother's cousin's brother:

LXXVII.

Another, that he was a duke, or knight,
An orator, a lawyer, or a priest,
A nabob, a man-midwife: but the wight
Mysterious changed his countenance at least
As oft as they their minds: though in full sight
He stood, the puzzle only was increased;
The man was a phantasmagoria in
Himself;—he was so volatile and thin.

LXXVIII.

The moment that you had pronounced him *one*,
Presto! his face changed, and he was another;
And when that change was hardly well put on,
It varied, till I don't think his own mother
(If that he had a mother) would her son
Have known, he shifted so from one to t'other;
Till guessing from a pleasure grew a task,
At this epistolary "Iron Mask."

LXXIX.

For sometimes he like Cerberus would seem—
"Three gentlemen at once" (as sagely says
Good Mrs. Malaprop); then you might deem
That he was not even *one*; now many rays
Were flashing round him: and now a thick steam
Hid him from sight—like fogs on London days:
Now Burke, now Tooke, he grew to people's fancies,
And certes often like Sir Philip Francis.

LXXX.

I've an hypothesis—'tis quite my own;
I never let it out till now, for fear
Of doing people harm about the throne,
And injuring some minister or peer,
On whom the stigma might perhaps be blown:
It is—my gentle public, lend thine ear!
'Tis that what Junius we are wont to call
Was *really*, *truly*, nobody at all.

LXXXI.

I don't see wherefore letters should not be
Written without hands, since we daily view
Them written without heads; and books, we see,
Are fill'd as well without the latter too:
And really till we fix on somebody
For certain sure to claim them as his due,
Their author, like the Niger's mouth, will bother
The world to say if *there* be mouth or author.

LXXXII.

"And who and what art thou?" the Archangel said.
"For *that* you may consult my title-page,"
Replied this mighty shadow of a shade:
"If I have kept my secret half an age,
I scarce shall tell it now." "Canst thou upbraid,"
Continued Michael, "George Rex, or allege
Aught further?" Junius answer'd, "You had better
First ask him for *his* answer to my letter:

LXXXIII.

"My charges upon record will outlast
The brass of both his epitaph and tomb."
"Repent'st thou not," said Michael, "of some past
Exaggeration?—something which may doom
Thyself if false, as him if true? Thou wast
Too bitter—is it not so?—in thy gloom
Of passion?"—"Passion!" cried the phantom dim,
"I loved my country, and I hated him.

LXXXIV.

"What I have written, I have written; let
The rest be on his head or mine!" So spoke
Old "Nominus Umbra;" and while speaking yet,
Away he melted in celestial smoke.
Then Satan said to Michael, "Don't forget
To call George Washington, and John Horne Tooke,
And Franklin;"—but at this time there was heard
A cry for room, though not a phantom stirr'd.

LXXXV.

At length with jostling, elbowing, and the aid
Of cherubim appointed to that post,
The devil Asmodeus to the circle made
His way, and look'd as if his journey cost
Some trouble. When his burden down he laid,
"What's this?" cried Michael; "why, 'tis not a ghost!"
"I know it," quoth the incubus; "but he
Shall be one, if you leave the affair to me.

LXXXVI.

"Confound the renegado! I have sprain'd
My left wing, he's so heavy; one would think
Some of his works about his neck were chain'd.
But to the point: while hovering o'er the brink
Of Skiddaw (where as usual it still rain'd),
I saw a taper, far below me, wink,
And stooping, caught this fellow at a libel—
No less on history than the Holy Bible.

LXXXVII.

"The former is the devil's scripture, and
The latter yours, good Michael; so the affair
Belongs to all of us, you understand.
I snatch'd him up just as you see him there,

And brought him off for sentence out of hand:
I've scarcely been ten minutes in the air—
At least a quarter it can hardly be:
I dare say that his wife is still at tea."

LXXXVIII.

Here Satan said: "I know this man of old,
And have expected him for some time here;
A sillier fellow you will scarce behold,
Or more conceited in his petty sphere:
But surely it was not worth while to fold
Such trash below your wing, Asmodeus dear:
We had the pôor wretch safe (without being bored
With carriage) coming of his own accord.

LXXXIX.

"But since he 's here, let 's see what he has done."
"Done!" cried Asmodeus, "he anticipates
The very business you are now upon,
And scribbles as if head clerk to the Fates.
Who knows to what his ribaldry may run,
When such an ass as this, like Balaam's, prates?"
"Let 's hear," quoth Michael, "what he has to say;
You know we're bound to that in every way."

XC.

Now the bard, glad to get an audience, which
By no means often was his case below,
Began to cough, and hawk, and hem, and pitch
His voice into that awful note of woe
To all unhappy hearers within reach
Of poets when the tide of rhyme 's in flow;
But stuck fast with his first hexameter,
Not one of all whose gouty feet would stir.

XCI.

But ere the spavin'd dactyls could be spurr'd
Into recitative, in great dismay,
Both cherubim and seraphim were heard
To murmur loudly through their long array;
And Michael rose ere he could get a word
Of all his founder'd verses under way,
And cried, "For God's sake stop, my friend; 'twere best—
Non Di, non homines—you know the rest."

XCII.

A general bustle spread throughout the throng,
Which seem'd to hold all verse in detestation;
The angels had of course enough of song
When upon service; and the generation
Of ghosts had heard too much in life, not long
Before, to profit by a new occasion:
The monarch, mute till then, exclaim'd, "What! what!
Pye come again? No more—no more of that!"

XCIII.

The tumult grew; an universal cough
Convulsed the skies, as during a debate,
When Castlereagh has been up long enough
(Before he was first minister of state.
I mean—the *slaves hear now*); some cried, "Off, off!"
As at a farce; till, grown quite desperate,
The bard Saint Peter pray'd to interpose
(Himself an author) only for his prose.

XCIV.

The varlet was not an ill-favor'd knave;
A good deal like a vulture in the face,
With a hook nose and a hawk's eye, which gave
A smart and sharper-looking sort of grace
To his whole aspect, which, though rather grave,
Was by no means so ugly as his case;
But that indeed was hopeless as can be,
Quite a poetic felony "*de se*."

XCV.

Then Michael blew his trump, and still'd the noise
With one still greater, as is yet the mode
On earth besides; except some grumbling voice,
Which now and then will make a slight inroad
Upon decorous silence, few will twice
Lift up their lungs when fairly overcrow'd;
And now the bard could plead his own bad cause,
With all the attitudes of self-applause.

XCVI.

He said—(I only give the heads)—he said,
He meant no harm in scribbling; 'twas his way
Upon all topics; 'twas, besides, his bread,
Of which he butter'd both sides; 'twould delay
Too long the assembly (he was pleased to dread),
And take up rather more time than a day
To name his works—he would but cite a few—
"Wat Tyler"—"Rhymes on Blenheim"—"Waterloo."

XCVII.

He had written praises of a regicide;
He had written praises of all kings whatever;
He had written for republics far and wide,
And then against them bitterer than ever;
For pantisocracy he once had cried
Aloud, a scheme less moral than 'twas clever;
Then grew a hearty anti-Jacobin—
Had turn'd his coat—and would have turn'd his skin.

XCVIII.

He had sung against all battles, and again
In their high praise and glory; he had call'd
Reviewing "the ungentle craft," and then*
Become as base a critic as e'er crawl'd—

* See "Life of Henry Kirke White."

Fed, paid, and pamper'd by the very men
By whom his muse and morals had been maul'd:
He had written much blank verse, and blanker prose,
And more of both than anybody knows.

XCIX.

He had written Wesley's life;—here turning round
To Satan: "Sir, I'm ready to write yours,
In two octavo volumes, nicely bound,
With notes and preface, all that most allures
The pious purchaser; and there 's no ground
For fear, for I can choose my own reviewers:
So let me have the proper documents,
That I may add you to my other saints."

C.

Satan bow'd, and was silent. "Well, if you,
With amiable modesty, decline
My offer, what says Michael? There are few
Whose memoirs could be render'd more divine.
Mine is a pen of all work: not so new
As it was once, but I would make you shine
Like your own trumpet. By the way, my own
Has more of brass in it, and is as well blown.

CI.

"But talking about trumpets, here 's my vision!
Now you shall judge, all people; yes, you shall
Judge with my judgment, and by my decision
Be guided who shall enter heaven, or fall.
I settle all these things by intuition,
Times present, past, to come, heaven, hell, and all,
Like king Alfonso. When I thus see double,*
I save the Deity some words of trouble."

CII.

He ceased, and drew forth an MS.; and no
Persuasion on the part of devils, or saints,
Or angels, now could stop the torrent; so
He read the first three lines of the contents;
But at the fourth, the whole spiritual show
Had vanish'd, with variety of scents,
Ambrosial and sulphureous, as they sprang,
Like lightning, off from his "melodious twang."†

CIII.

Those grand heroics acted as a spell;
The angels stopp'd their ears and plied their pinions;
The devils ran howling, deafen'd, down to hell;
The ghosts fled, gibbering, for their own dominions—

* Alfonso, speaking of the Ptolomean system, said, that "had he been consulted at the creation of the world, he would have spared the Maker some absurdities."

† See Aubrey's account of the apparition which disappeared "with a curious perfume and a *most melodious twang*;" or see the *Antiquary*, vol. i. p. 225.

THE MAID OF ATHENS. — Page 508.

(For 'tis not yet decided where they dwell,
And I leave every man to his opinions);
Michael took refuge in his trump—but, lo!
His teeth were set on edge, he could not blow!

CIV.

Saint Peter, who has hitherto been known
For an impetuous saint, upraised his keys,
And at the fifth line knock'd the poet down;
Who fell like Phaethon, but more at ease,
Into his lake, for there he did not drown;
A different web being by the Destinies
Woven for the Laureate's final wreath, whene'er
Reform shall happen either here or there.

CV.

He first sank to the bottom—like his works,
But soon rose to the surface—like himself;
For all corrupted things are buoy'd, like corks,*
By their own rottenness, light as an elf,
Or wisp that flits o'er a morass; he lurks,
It may be, still, like dull books on a shelf,
In his own den, to scrawl some "Life" or "Vision,"
As Welborn says—"the devil turn'd precisian."

CVI.

As for the rest, to come to the conclusion
Of this true dream, the telescope is gone
Which kept my optics free from all delusion,
And show'd me what I in my turn have shown;
All I saw further, in the last confusion,
Was, that King George slipp'd into heaven for one;
And when the tumult dwindled to a calm,
I left him practising the hundredth psalm.

* A drowned body lies at the bottom till rotten; it then floats, as most people know.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

MAID OF ATHENS, ERE WE PART.

Σώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.*

MAID of Athens, ere we part,
Give, oh, give me back my heart!
Or, since that has left my breast,
Keep it now, and take the rest!
Hear my vow before I go,
Σώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

By those tresses unconfined,
Woo'd by each Ægean wind;
By those lids whose jetty fringe
Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge;
By those wild eyes like the roe,
Σώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

By that lip I long to taste;
By that zone-encircled waist;
By all the token-flowers that tell†
What words can never speak so well;
By love's alternate joy and woe,
Σώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

Maid of Athens! I am gone:
Think of me, sweet! when alone.
Though I fly to Istambol,‡
Athens holds my heart and soul:
Can I cease to love thee? No!
Σώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

ATHENS, 1810.

* Romaic expression of tenderness: if I translate it, I shall affront the gentlemen, as it may seem that I supposed they could not; and if I do not, I may affront the ladies. For fear of any misconstruction on the part of the latter, I shall do so, begging pardon of the learned. It means, "My life, I love you!" which sounds very prettily in all languages, and is as much in fashion in Greece at this day, as, Juvenal tells us, the two first words were amongst the Roman ladies, whose erotic expressions were all Hellenized.

† In the East, (where ladies are not taught to write, lest they should scribble assignations,) flowers, cinders, pebbles, &c., convey the sentiments of the parties, by that universal deputy of Mercury—an old woman. A cinder says, "I burn for thee;" a bunch of flowers tied with hair, "Take me and fly;" but a pebble declares—what nothing else can.

‡ Constantinople.

FAREWELL! IF EVER FONDEST PRAYER.

FAREWELL! if ever fondest prayer
For others' weal avail'd on high,
Mine will not all be lost in air,
But waft thy name beyond the sky.
'Twere vain to speak, to weep, to sigh:
Oh! more than tears of blood can tell,
When wrung from guilt's expiring eye,
Are in that word—Farewell!—Farewell!

These lips are mute, these eyes are dry;
But in my breast and in my brain
Awake the pangs that pass not by,
The thought that ne'er shall sleep again.
My soul nor deigns nor dares complain,
Though grief and passion there rebel:
I only know we loved in vain—
I only feel—Farewell!—Farewell!

1808.

BRIGHT BE THE PLACE OF THY SOUL.

BRIGHT be the place of thy soul!
No lovelier spirit than thine
E'er burst from its mortal control,
In the orbs of the blessed to shine.

On earth thou wert all but divine,
As thy soul shall immortally be;
And our sorrow may cease to repine,
When we know that thy God is with thee.

Light be the turf of thy tomb!
May its verdure like emeralds be:
There should not be the shadow of gloom
In aught that reminds us of thee.

Young flowers and an evergreen tree
May spring from the spot of thy rest:
But nor cypress nor yew let us see;
For why should we mourn for the blest?

1808.

REMIND ME NOT, REMIND ME NOT.

REMIND me not, remind me not,
Of those beloved, those vanish'd hours,
When all my soul was given to thee;
Hours that may never be forgot,
Till time unnerves our vital powers,
And thou and I shall cease to be.

Can I forget—canst thou forget,
When playing with thy golden hair,
How quick thy fluttering heart did move?

Oh! by my soul, I see thee yet,
With eyes so languid, breast so fair,
And lips, though silent, breathing love.

When thus reclining on my breast,
Those eyes threw back a glance so sweet,
As half reproach'd yet raised desire,
And still we near and nearer prest,
And still our glowing lips would meet,
As if in kisses to expire.

And then those pensive eyes would close,
And bid their lids each other seek,
Veiling the azure orbs below;
While their long lashes' darken'd gloss
Seem'd stealing o'er thy brilliant cheek,
Like raven's plumage smooth'd on snow.

I dreamt last night our love return'd,
And, sooth to say, that very dream
Was sweeter in its fantasy,
Than if for other hearts I burn'd,
For eyes that ne'er like thine could beam
In rapture's wild reality.

Then tell me not, remind me not,
Of hours which, though for ever gone,
Can still a pleasing dream restore,
Till thou and I shall be forgot,
And senseless as the mouldering stone
Which tells that we shall be no more.

THERE WAS A TIME, I NEED NOT NAME.

THERE was a time, I need not name,
Since it will ne'er forgotten be,
When all our feelings were the same
As still my soul hath been to thee.

And from that hour when first thy tongue
Confess'd a love which equall'd mine,
Though many a grief my heart hath wrung,
Unknown, and thus unfelt by thine,

None, none hath sunk so deep as this—
To think how all that love hath flown;
Transient as every faithless kiss,
But transient in thy breast alone.

And yet my heart some solace knew,
When late I heard thy lips declare,
In accents once imagined true,
Remembrance of the days that were.

Yes! my adored, yet most unkind!
Though thou wilt never love again,
To me 'tis doubly sweet to find
Remembrance of that love remain.

Yes! 'tis a glorious thought to me,
Nor longer shall my soul repine,
Whate'er thou art, or e'er shalt be,
Thou hast been dearly, solely mine.

AND WILT THOU WEEP WHEN I AM LOW?

And wilt thou weep when I am low?
Sweet lady! speak those words again:
Yet if they grieve thee, say not so—
I would not give that bosom pain.

My heart is sad, my hopes are gone,
My blood runs coldly through my breast;
And when I perish, thou alone
Wilt sigh above my place of rest.

And yet, methinks, a gleam of peace
Doth through my cloud of anguish shine;
And for a while my sorrows cease,
To know thy heart hath felt for mine.

O lady! blessed be that tear—
It falls for one who cannot weep:
Such precious drops are doubly dear
To those whose eyes no tear may steep.

Sweet lady! once my heart was warm
With every feeling soft as thine;
But Beauty's self hath ceased to charm
A wretch created to repine.

Yet wilt thou weep when I am low?
Sweet lady! speak those words again;
Yet if they grieve thee, say not so—
I would not give that bosom pain.

ON PARTING.

The kiss, dear maid! thy lip has left
Shall never part from mine,
Till happier hours restore the gift
Untainted back to thine.

Thy parting glance, which fondly beams,
An equal love may see;
The tear that from thine eyelid streams
Can weep no change in me.

I ask no pledge to make me blest
In gazing when alone;
Nor one memorial for a breast
Whose thoughts are all thine own.

Nor need I write—to tell the tale
My pen were doubly weak:
Oh! what can idle words avail,
Unless the heart could speak?

By day or night, in weal or woe,
That heart, no longer free,
Must bear the love it cannot show,
And silent, ache for thee.

March, 1811.

THOU ART NOT FALSE, BUT THOU ART FICKLE.

Thou art not false, but thou art fickle,
To those thyself so fondly sought;
The tears that thou hast forced to trickle
Are doubly bitter from that thought:
'Tis this which breaks the heart thou grievest,
Too well thou lov'st—too soon thou leavest.

The wholly false the heart despises,
And spurns deceiver and deceit;
But she who not a thought disguises,
Whose love is as sincere as sweet,—
When she can change who loved so truly,
It feels what mine has felt so newly.

To dream of joy and wake to sorrow,
Is doom'd to all who love or live;
And if, when conscious on the morrow,
We scarce our fancy can forgive,
That cheated us in slumber only,
To leave the waking soul more lonely.

What must they feel whom no false vision,
But truest, tenderest passion warm'd?
Sincere, but swift in sad transition;
As if a dream alone had charm'd?
Ah! sure such grief is fancy's scheming,
And all thy change can be but dreaming!

REMEMBER HIM, WHOM PASSION'S POWER.

Remember him, whom passion's power
Severely, deeply, vainly proved:
Remember thou that dangerous hour
When neither fell, though both were loved.

That yielding breast, that melting eye,
Too much invited to be bless'd;
That gentle prayer, that pleading sigh,
The wilder wish reproved, repress'd.

Oh! let me feel that all I lost
But saved thee all that conscience fears;
And blush for every pang it cost
To spare the vain remorse of years.

Yet think of this when many a tongue,
Whose busy accents whisper blame,
Would do the heart that loved thee wrong,
And brand a nearly blighted name.

Think that, whate'er to others, thou
Hast seen each selfish thought subdued:
I bless thy purer soul even now,
Even now, in midnight solitude.

Oh, God! that we had met in time,
Our hearts as fond, thy hand more free;
When thou hadst loved without a crime,
And I been less unworthy thee.

Far may thy days, as heretofore,
From this our gaudy world be past!
And that too bitter moment o'er,
Oh! may such trial be thy last!

This heart, alas! perverted long,
Itself destroy'd might thee destroy;
To meet thee in the glittering throng,
Would wake Presumption's hope of joy.

Then to the things whose bliss or woe,
Like mine, is wild and worthless all,
That world resign—such scenes forego,
Where those who feel must surely fall.

Thy youth, thy charms, thy tenderness,
Thy soul from long seclusion pure;
From what even here hath pass'd, may guess
What there thy bosom must endure.

Oh! pardon that imploring tear,
Since not by Virtue shed in vain,
My frenzy drew from eyes so dear;
For me they shall not weep again.

Though long and mournful must it be,
The thought that we no more may meet;
Yet I deserve the stern decree,
And almost deem the sentence sweet.

Still, had I loved thee less, my heart
Had then less sacrificed to thine;
It felt not half so much to part,
As if its guilt had made thee mine.

1813.

LINES WRITTEN BENEATH A PICTURE.

Dear object of defeated care!
Though now of Love and thee bereft,
To reconcile me with despair,
Thine image and my tears are left.
'Tis said with Sorrow Time can cope;
But this I feel can ne'er be true:
For by the deathblow of my Hope
My Memory immortal grew.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters
With a magic like thee;
And like music on the waters
Is thy sweet voice to me:
When, as if its sound were causing
The charmed ocean's pausing,
The waves lie still and gleaming,
And the lull'd winds seem dreaming.

And the midnight moon is weaving
Her bright chain o'er the deep;
Whose breast is gently heaving,
As an infant's asleep:
So the spirit bows before thee,
To listen and adore thee;
With a full but soft emotion,
Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

THE CHAIN I GAVE.

FROM THE TURKISH.

THE chain I gave was fair to view,
The lute I added sweet in sound;
The heart that offer'd both was true,
And ill deserved the fate it found.

These gifts were charm'd by secret spell,
Thy truth in absence to divine;
And they have done their duty well,—
Alas! they could not teach thee thine.

That chain was firm in every link,
But not to bear a stranger's touch;
That lute was sweet—till thou couldst think
In other hands its notes were such.

Let him, who from thy neck unbound
The chain which shiver'd in his grasp,
Who saw that lute refuse to sound,
Re-string the chords, renew the clasp.

When thou wert changed, they alter'd too;
The chain is broke, the music mute.
'Tis past—to them and thee adieu—
False heart, frail chain, and silent lute.

TRANSLATION OF THE ROMAIC SONG:

"Μπενω μες 'τσ' πέριζόλι·
'Ωραιότατη Χαηδή," &c.*

I ENTER thy garden of roses,
Beloved and fair Haidée,

* The song from which this is taken is a great favorite with the young girls of Athens of all classes. Their manner of singing it is by verses in rotation, the whole number present joining in the chorus. The air is plaintive and pretty.

Each morning where Flora reposes,
For surely I see her in thee.
Oh, Lovely! thus low I implore thee,
Receive this fond truth from my tongue,
Which utters its song to adore thee,
Yet trembles for what it has sung;
As the branch at the bidding of Nature,
Adds fragrance and fruit to the tree,
Through her eyes, through her every feature,
Shines the soul of the young Haidée.

But the loveliest garden grows hateful
When Love has abandon'd the bowers;
Bring me hemlock—since mine is ungrateful,
That herb is more fragrant than flowers.
The poison, when pour'd from the chalice,
Will deeply embitter the bowl;
But when drunk to escape from thy malice,
The draught shall be sweet to my soul.
Too cruel! in vain I implore thee
My heart from these horrors to save:
Will nought to my bosom restore thee?
Then open the gates of the grave.

As the chief who to combat advances
Secure of his conquest before,
Thus thou, with those eyes for thy lances,
Hast pierced through my heart to its core.
Ah, tell me, my soul! must I perish
By pangs which a smile would dispel?
Would the hope, which thou once bad'st me cherish,
For torture repay me too well?
Now sad is the garden of roses,
Beloved but false Haidée!
There Flora all wither'd reposes
And mourns o'er thine absence with me.

TRANSLATION OF A ROMAIC LOVE SONG.

Ah! Love was never yet without
The pang, the agony, the doubt,
Which rends my heart with ceaseless sigh,
While day and night roll darkling by.

Without one friend to hear my woe,
I faint, I die beneath the blow.
That Love had arrows, well I knew;
Alas! I find them poison'd too.

Birds, yet in freedom, shun the net
Which Love around your haunts hath set;
Or, circled by his fatal fire,
Your hearts shall burn, your hopes expire.

A bird of free and careless wing
Was I, through many a smiling spring;
But caught within the subtle snare,
I burn, and feebly flutter there.

Who ne'er have loved, and loved in vain,
Can neither feel nor pity pain,
The cold repulse, the look askance,
The lightning of Love's angry glance.

In flattering dreams I deem'd thee mine;
Now hope, and he who hoped, decline;
Like melting wax, or withering flower,
I feel my passion, and thy power.

My light of life! ah, tell me why
That pouting lip, and alter'd eye?
My bird of love! my beauteous mate!
And art thou changed, and canst thou hate?

Mine eyes like wintry streams o'erflow:
What wretch with me would barter woe?
My bird! relent! one note could give
A charm, to bid thy lover live.

My curdling blood, my madd'ning brain,
In silent anguish I sustain;
And still thy heart, without partaking
One pang, exults—while mine is breaking.

Pour me the poison; fear not thou!
Thou canst not murder more than now:
I've lived to curse my natal day,
And Love that thus can lingering slay.

My wounded soul, my bleeding breast,
Can patience preach thee into rest?
Alas! too late, I dearly know
That joy is harbinger of woe.

FROM THE PORTUGUESE.

"TU MI CHAMAS."

In moments to delight devoted,
"My life!" with tenderest tone, you cry!
Dear words! on which my heart had doted,
If youth could neither fade nor die.

To death even hours like these must roll,
Ah! then repeat those accents never;
Or change "my life!" into "my soul!"
Which, like my love, exists for ever.

ANOTHER VERSION.

You call me still your *life*.—Oh! change the word—
Life is as transient as the inconstant sigh;
Say rather I'm your soul; more just that name;
For, like the soul, my love can never die.

SONNETS TO GENEVRA.

I.

THINE eyes' blue tenderness, thy long fair hair,
And the wan lustre of thy features—caught
From contemplation—where serenely wrought,
Seems Sorrow's softness charm'd from its despair—
Have thrown such speaking sadness in thine air,
That—but I know thy blessed bosom fraught
With mines of unalloy'd and stainless thought—
I should have deem'd thee doom'd to earthly care.
With such an aspect, by his colors blent,
When from his beauty-breathing pencil born,
(Except that *thou* hast nothing to repent)
The Magdalen of Guido saw the morn—
Such seem'st thou—but how much more excellent!
With nought Remorse can claim—nor Virtue scorn.

December 17, 1813.

II.

THY cheek is pale with thought, but not from woe,
And yet so lovely, that if Mirth could flush
Its rose of whiteness with the brightest blush,
My heart would wish away that ruder glow:
And dazzle not thy deep-blue eyes—but, oh!
While gazing on them sterner eyes will gush,
And into mine my mother's weakness rush,
Soft as the last drops round heaven's airy bow.
For, through thy long dark lashes low depending,
The soul of melancholy Gentleness
Gleams like a seraph from the sky descending,
Above all pain, yet pitying all distress;
At once such majesty with sweetness blending,
I worship more, but cannot love thee less.

SONNET TO LAKE LEMAN.

ROUSSEAU—Voltaire—Our Gibbon, and De Staël—
Leman! these names are worthy of thy shore,*
Thy shore of names like these! wert thou no more,
Their memory thy remembrance would recall:
To them thy banks were lovely as to all,
But they have made them lovelier, for the lore
Of mighty minds doth hallow in the core
Of human hearts the ruin of a wall
Where dwelt the wise and wondrous; but by *thee*,
How much more, Lake of Beauty! do we feel,
In sweetly gliding o'er thy crystal sea,
The wild glow of that not ungentle zeal,
Which of the heirs of immortality
Is proud, and makes the breath of glory real!

* Geneva, Ferney, Copet, Lausanne.

DARKNESS.

I HAD a dream, which was not all a dream.
The bright sun was extinguish'd, and the stars
Did wander darkling in the eternal space,
Rayless, and pathless, and the icy earth
Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air;
Morn came and went—and came, and brought no day,
And men forgot their passions in the dread
Of this their desolation; and all hearts
Were chill'd into a selfish prayer for light:
And they did live by watchfires—and the thrones,
The palaces of crowned kings—the huts,
The habitations of all things which dwell,
Were burnt for beacons; cities were consumed,
And men were gather'd round their blazing homes
To look once more into each others' face;
Happy were those who dwelt within the eye
Of the volcanoes, and their mountain-torch:
A fearful hope was all the world contain'd;
Forests were set on fire—but hour by hour
They fell and faded—and the crackling trunks
Extinguish'd with a crash—and all was black.
The brows of men by the despairing light
Wore an unearthly aspect, as by fits
The flashes fell upon them; some lay down
And hid their eyes and wept; and some did rest
Their chins upon their clenched hands, and smiled;
And others hurried to and fro, and fed
Their funeral piles with fuel, and look'd up
With mad disquietude on the dull sky,
The pall of a past world; and then again
With curses cast them down upon the dust,
And gnash'd their teeth and howl'd: the wild birds shriek'd,
And, terrified, did flutter on the ground,
And flap their useless wings; the wildest brutes
Came tame and tremulous; and vipers crawl'd
And twined themselves among the multitude,
Hissing but stingless—they were slain for food:
And War, which for a moment was no more,
Did glut himself again;—a meal was bought
With blood, and each sate sullenly apart
Gorging himself in gloom: no love was left;
All earth was but one thought—and that was death,
Immediate and inglorious; and the pang
Of famine fed upon all entrails—men
Died, and their bones were tombless as their flesh;
The meagre by the meagre were devour'd,
Even dogs assail'd their masters, all save one,
And he was faithful to a corse, and kept
The birds and beasts and famish'd men at bay,
Till hunger clung them, or the dropping dead
Lured their lank jaws; himself sought out no food,
But with a piteous and perpetual moan,
And a quick desolate cry, licking the hand
Which answered not with a caress—he died.

The crowd was famish'd by degrees; but two
Of an enormous city did survive,
And they were enemies: they met beside
The dying embers of an altar-place
Where had been heap'd a mass of holy things
For an unholy usage; they raked up,
And shivering scraped with their cold skeleton hands
The feeble ashes, and their feeble breath
Blew for a little life, and made a flame
Which was a mockery; then they lifted up
Their eyes as it grew lighter, and beheld
Each other's aspects—saw, and shriek'd, and died—
Even of their mutual hideousness they died,
Unknowing who he was upon whose brow
Famine had written Fiend. The world was void,
The populous and the powerful was a lump,
Seasonless, herbless, treeless, manless, lifeless—
A lump of death—a chaos of hard clay.
The rivers, lakes, and ocean all stood still,
And nothing stirr'd within their silent depths;
Ships sailorless lay rotting on the sea,
And their masts fell down piecemeal; as they dropp'd
They slept on the abyss without a surge—
The waves were dead; the tides were in their grave,
The Moon, their mistress, had expired before;
The winds were wither'd in the stagnant air,
And the clouds perish'd! Darkness had no need
Of aid from them—She was the Universe!

DIODATI, *July*, 1816.

CHURCHILL'S GRAVE.

A FACT LITERALLY RENDERED.

I STOOD beside the grave of him who blazed
The comet of a season, and I saw
The humblest of all sepulchres, and gazed
With not the less of sorrow and of awe
On that neglected turf and quiet stone,
With name no clearer than the names unknown,
Which lay unread around it; and I ask'd
The Gardener of that ground, why it might be
That for this plant strangers his memory task'd
Through the thick deaths of half a century?
And thus he answer'd: "Well, I do not know
Why frequent travellers turn to pilgrims so;
He died before my day of Sextonship,
And I had not the digging of this grave."
And is this all? I thought,—and do we rip
The veil of Immortality? and crave
I know not what of honor and of light
Through unborn ages, to endure this blight?
So soon, and so successless? As I said,
The Architect of all on which we tread,
For Earth is but a tombstone, did essay
To extricate remembrance from the clay,

Whose minglings might confuse a Newton's thought,
Were it not that all life must end in one,
Of which we are but dreamers;—as he caught
As 'twere the twilight of a former Sun,
Thus spoke he: "I believe the man of whom
You wot, who lies in this selected tomb,
Was a most famous writer in his day,
And therefore travellers step from out their way
To pay to him honor,—and myself whate'er
Your honor pleases." Then most pleased I shook
From out my pocket's avaricious nook
Some certain coins of silver, which as 'twere
Perforce I gave this man, though I could spare
So much but inconveniently:—Ye smile,
I see ye, ye profane ones! all the while,
Because my homely phrase the truth would tell.
You are the fools, not I—for I did dwell
With a deep thought, and with a soften'd eye,
On that old Sexton's natural homily,
In which there was Obscurity and Fame,—
The Glory and the Nothing of a Name.

DIODATI, 1816.

TO A YOUTHFUL FRIEND.

FEW years have pass'd since thou and I
Were firmest friends, at least in name,
And childhood's gay sincerity
Preserved our feelings long the same.

But now, like me, too well thou know'st
What trifles oft the heart recall;
And those who once have loved the most
Too soon forget they loved at all.

And such the change the heart displays,
So frail is early friendship's reign,
A month's brief lapse, perhaps a day's,
Will view thy mind estranged again.

If so, it never shall be mine
To mourn the loss of such a heart;
The fault was Nature's fault, not thine,
Which made thee fickle as thou art.

As rolls the ocean's changing tide,
So human feelings ebb and flow;
And who would in a breast confide
Where stormy passions ever glow!

It boots not that, together bred,
Our childish days were days of joy:
My spring of life has quickly fled;
Thou, too, hast ceased to be a boy.

And when we bid adieu to youth,
Slaves to the specious world's control,
We sigh a long farewell to truth;
That world corrupts the noblest soul.

Ah, joyous season! when the mind
Dares all things boldly but to lie;
When thought ere spoke is unconfined,
And sparkles in the placid eye.

Not so in Man's maturer years,
When Man himself is but a tool;
When interest sways our hopes and fears,
And all must love and hate by rule.

With fools in kindred vice the same,
We learn at length our faults to blend;
And those, and those alone, may claim
The prostituted name of friend.

Such is the common lot of man:
Can we then 'scape from folly free?
Can we reverse the general plan,
Nor be what all in turn must be?

No; for myself, so dark my fate
Through every turn of life hath been,
Man and the world I so much hate,
I care not when I quit the scene.

But thou, with spirit frail and light,
Wilt shine awhile, and pass away;
As glow-worms sparkle through the night,
But dare not stand the test of day.

Alas! whenever folly calls
Where parasites and princes meet,
(For cherish'd first in royal halls,
The welcome vices kindly greet,)

E'en now thou 'rt nightly seen to add
One insect to the fluttering crowd;
And still thy trifling heart is glad
To join the vain, and court the proud.

There dost thou glide from fair to fair,
Still simpering on with eager haste,
As flies along the gay parterre
That taint the flowers they scarcely taste.

But say, what nymph will prize the flame
Which seems, as marshy vapors move,
To flit along from dame to dame,
An ignis-fatuus gleam of love?

What friend for thee, howe'er inclined,
Will deign to own a kindred care?
Who will debase his manly mind,
For friendship every fool may share?

In time forbear; amidst the throng
No more so base a thing be seen;
No more so idly pass along:
Be something, anything, but—mean.

1808.

INSCRIPTION ON THE MONUMENT OF A NEWFOUNDLAND DOG.

When some proud son of man returns to earth,
Unknown to glory, but upheld by birth,
The sculptor's art exhausts the pomp of woe,
And storied urns record who rests below;
When all is done, upon the tomb is seen,
Not what he was, but what he should have been:
But the poor dog, in life the firmest friend,
The first to welcome, foremost to defend,
Whose honest heart is still his master's own,
Who labors, fights, lives, breathes for him alone,
Unhonor'd falls, unnoticed all his worth,
Denied in heaven the soul he held on earth:
While man, vain insect! hopes to be forgiven,
And claims himself a sole exclusive heaven.
Oh man! thou feeble tenant of an hour,
Debased by slavery, or corrupt by power,
Who knows thee well must quit thee with disgust,
Degraded mass of animated dust!
Thy love is lust, thy friendship all a cheat,
Thy smiles hypocrisy, thy words deceit!
By nature vile, ennobled but by name,
Each kindred brute might bid thee blush for shame.
Ye! who perchance behold this simple urn,
Pass on—it honors none you wish to mourn:
To mark a friend's remains these stones arise;
I never knew but one,—and here he lies.

Newstead Abbey, *November* 30, 1808.

TO TIME.

Time! on whose arbitrary wing
The varying hours must flag or fly,
Whose tardy winter, fleeting spring,
But drag or drive us on to die—

Hail thou! who on my birth bestow'd
Those boons to all that know thee known;
Yet better I sustain thy load,
For now I bear the weight alone.

I would not one fond heart should share
The bitter moments thou hast given;
And pardon thee, since thou couldst spare
All that I loved, to peace or heaven.

To them be joy or rest, on me
Thy future ills shall press in vain:
I nothing owe but years to thee,
A debt already paid in pain.

Yet even that pain was some relief;
It felt, but still forgot thy power:
The active agony of grief
Retards, but never counts the hour.

In joy I've sigh'd to think thy flight
Would soon subside from swift to slow,
Thy cloud could overcast the light,
But could not add a night to woe;

For then, however drear and dark
My soul was suited to thy sky,
One star alone shot forth a spark
To prove thee not—Eternity.

That beam hath sunk, and now thou art
A blank; a thing to count and curse,
Through each dull tedious trifling part,
Which all regret, yet all rehearse.

One scene even thou canst not deform;
The limit of thy sloth or speed
When future wanderers bear the storm
Which we shall sleep too sound to heed:

And I can smile to think how weak
Thine efforts shortly shall be shown,
When all the vengeance thou canst wreak
Must fall upon—a nameless stone.

LINES INSCRIBED UPON A CUP FORMED FROM A SKULL.

START not—nor deem my spirit fled:
In me behold the only skull,
From which, unlike a living head,
Whatever flows is never dull.

I lived, I loved, I quaff'd, like thee:
I died: let earth my bones resign:
Fill up—thou canst not injure me;
The worm hath fouler lips than thine.

Better to hold the sparkling grape,
Than nurse the earth-worm's slimy brood;
And circle in the goblet's shape
The drink of gods, than reptile's food.

Where once my wit, perchance, hath shone,
In aid of others' let me shine;
And when, alas! our brains are gone,
What nobler substitute than wine?

Quaff while thou canst: another race,
When thou and thine, like me, are sped,
May rescue thee from earth's embrace,
And rhyme and revel with the dead.

Why not—since through life's little day
Our heads such sad effects produce?
Redeem'd from worms and wasting clay,
This chance is theirs, to be of use.

NEWSTEAD ABBEY, 1808.

PROMETHEUS.

TITAN! to whose immortal eyes
The sufferings of mortality,
Seen in their sad reality,
Were not as things that gods despise;
What was thy pity's recompense?
A silent suffering, and intense;
The rock, the vulture, and the chain,
All that the proud can feel of pain,
The agony they do not show
The suffocating sense of woe,
Which speaks but in its loneliness,
And then is jealous lest the sky
Should have a listener, nor will sigh
Until its voice is echoless.
Titan! to thee the strife was given
Between the suffering and the will,
Which torture where they cannot kill;
And the inexorable Heaven,
And the deaf tyranny of Fate,
The ruling principle of Hate,
Which for its pleasure doth create
The things it may annihilate,
Refused thee even the boon to die;
The wretched gift eternity
Was thine—and thou hast borne it well.
All that the Thunderer wrung from thee
Was but the menace which flung back
On him the torments of thy rack;
The fate thou didst so well foresee,
But would not to appease him tell;
And in thy Silence was his Sentence,
And in his Soul a vain repentance,
And evil dread so ill dissembled,
That in his hand the lightnings trembled.

Thy Godlike crime was to be kind,
To render with thy precept less
The sum of human wretchedness,
And strengthen Man with his own mind;
But baffled as thou wert from high,
Still in thy patient energy,
In the endurance, and repulse
Of thine impenetrable Spirit,
Which Earth and Heaven could not convulse,
A mighty lesson we inherit:
Thou art a symbol and a sign
To Mortals of their fate and force;

Like thee, Man is in part divine,
A troubled stream from a pure source;
And Man in portions can foresee
His own funereal destiny;
His wretchedness, and his resistance,
And his sad unallied existence:
To which his Spirit may oppose
Itself—and equal to all woes,
And a firm will, and a deep sense,
Which even in torture can descry
Its own concentred recompense,
Triumphant where it dares defy,
And making Death a Victory!

DIODATI, *July*, 1816.

LINES WRITTEN IN THE TRAVELLERS' BOOK AT ORCHOMENUS.

IN THIS BOOK A TRAVELLER HAD WRITTEN:—

"FAIR ALBION, smiling, sees her son depart,
To trace the birth and nursery of art:
Noble his object, glorious is his aim;
He comes to Athens, and he writes his name!"

BENEATH WHICH LORD BYRON INSERTED THE FOLLOWING:—

THE modest bard, like many a bard unknown,
Rhymes on our names, but wisely hides his own;
But yet, whoe'er he be, to say no worse,
His name would bring more credit than his verse.

LINES WRITTEN IN AN ALBUM, AT MALTA.

As o'er the cold sepulchral stone
Some name arrests the passer-by;
Thus, when thou view'st this page alone,
May mine attract thy pensive eye!

And when by thee that name is read,
Perchance in some succeeding year,
Reflect on me as on the dead,
And think my heart is buried here.

September 14, 1809.

WRITTEN AFTER SWIMMING FROM SESTOS TO ABYDOS.*

IF, in the month of dark December,
Leander, who was nightly wont
(What maid will not the tale remember?)
To cross thy stream, broad Hellespont!

* On the 3d of May, 1810, while the "Salsette" (Captain Bathurst) was lying in the Dardanelles, Lieutenant Ekenhead of that frigate and the writer of these rhymes swam from the European shore to the Asiatic—by the by, from Abydos to Sestos would have been more correct. The whole distance from the place whence we started to our landing on the other side, including the length we were carried by the current, was computed by those on board the frigate at upwards

If, when the wintry tempest roar'd,
He sped to Hero, nothing loath,
And thus of old thy current pour'd,
Fair Venus! how I pity both!

For *me*, degenerate modern wretch,
Though in the genial month of May,
My dripping limbs I faintly stretch,
And think I've done a feat to-day.

But since he cross'd the rapid tide,
According to the doubtful story,
To woo—and—Lord knows what beside,
And swam for Love, as I for Glory;

'Twere hard to say who fared the best:
Sad mortals! thus the gods still plague you!
He lost his labor, I my jest;
For he was drown'd, and I've the ague.

May 9, 1810.

TRANSLATION OF THE FAMOUS GREEK WAR SONG

"Δεῦτε παῖδες τῶν Ἑλλήνων." *

Sons of the Greeks, arise!
The glorious hour 's gone forth,
And, worthy of such ties,
Display who gave us birth.

CHORUS.

Sons of Greeks! let us go
In arms against the foe,
Till their hated blood shall flow
In a river past our feet.

Then manfully despising
The Turkish tyrant's yoke,
Let your country see you rising,
And all her chains are broke.

of four English miles; though the actual breadth is barely one. The rapidity of the current is such that no boat can row directly across, and it may, in some measure, be estimated from the circumstance of the whole distance being accomplished by one of the parties in an hour and five, and by the other in an hour and ten minutes. The water was extremely cold, from the melting of the mountain snows. About three weeks before, in April, we had made an attempt; but having ridden all the way from the Troad the same morning, and the water being of an icy chillness, we found it necessary to postpone the completion till the frigate anchored below the castles, when we swam the straits, as just stated; entering a considerable way above the European, and landing below the Asiatic fort. Chevalier says that a young Jew swam the same distance for his mistress; and Oliver mentions its having been done by a Neapolitan; but our consul, Tarragona, remembered neither of these circumstances, and tried to dissuade us from the attempt. A number of the "Salsette's" crew were known to have accomplished a greater distance; and the only thing that surprised me was, that, as doubts had been entertained of the truth of Leander's story, no traveller had ever endeavored to ascertain its practicability.

* The song was written by Riga, who perished in the attempt to revolutionize Greece. This translation is as literal as the author could make it in verse. It is of the same measure as that of the original.

Brave shades of chiefs and sages,
Behold the coming strife!
Hellénes of past ages,
Oh, start again to life!
At the sound of my trumpet, breaking
Your sleep, oh, join with me!
And the seven-hill'd city seeking,*
Fight, conquer, till we're free.
Sons of Greeks, &c.

Sparta, Sparta, why in slumbers
Lethargic dost thou lie?
Awake, and join thy numbers
With Athens, old ally!
Leonidas recalling,
That chief of ancient song,
Who saved ye once from falling,
The terrible! the strong!
Who made that bold diversion
In old Thermopylæ,
And warring with the Persian
To keep his country free;
With his three hundred waging
The battle, long he stood,
And like a lion raging,
Expired in seas of blood.
Sons of Greeks, &c.

THE SPELL IS BROKE, THE CHARM IS FLOWN.

WRITTEN AT ATHENS, JANUARY 16, 1810.

THE spell is broke, the charm is flown!
Thus is it with life's fitful fever:
We madly smile when we should groan;
Delirium is our best deceiver.

Each lucid interval of thought
Recalls the woes of Nature's charter,
And he that acts as wise men ought,
But lives, as saints have died, a martyr.

STANZAS

WRITTEN ON PASSING THE AMBRACIAN GULF.†

THROUGH cloudless skies, in silvery sheen,
Full beams the moon on Actium's coast;
And on these waves, for Egypt's queen,
The ancient world was won and lost.

* Constantinople.

† The lady referred to in this and the two following pieces—the wife of Mr. Spencer Smith, and daughter of Baron Herbert, Austrian ambassador at Constantinople, where she was born—was a very remarkable person, and experienced a variety of striking adventures. She was unhappy in her marriage, yet of unblemished reputation; had engaged in some plots against Bonaparte, which excited his vengeance; was made prisoner, but subsequently escaped; afterwards suffered shipwreck—and all before she was 25 years of age. The poet met her at Malta, on her way to England to join her husband; and these poems, and a reference to her in "Childe Harold," are memorials of their brief acquaintance.

And now upon the scene I look,
The azure grave of many a Roman;
Where stern Ambition once forsook
His wavering crown to follow woman.

Florence! whom I will love as well
As ever yet was said or sung,
(Since Orpheus sang his spouse from hell)
Whilst thou art fair and I am young;

Sweet Florence! those were pleasant times,
When worlds were staked for ladies' eyes:
Had bards as many realms as rhymes,
Thy charms might raise new Antonics.

Though Fate forbids such things to be,
Yet, by thine eyes and ringlets curl'd!
I cannot lose a world for thee,
But would not lose thee for a world.

November 14, 1809.

TO FLORENCE.

O LADY! when I left the shore,
The distant shore which gave me birth,
I hardly thought to grieve once more,
To quit another spot on earth:

Yet here, amidst this barren isle,
Where panting Nature droops the head,
Where only thou art seen to smile,
I view my parting hour with dread.

Though far from Albin's craggy shore,
Divided by the dark blue main;
A few brief, rolling seasons o'er,
Perchance I view her cliffs again:

But wheresoe'er I now may roam,
Through scorching clime, and varied sea,
Though Time restore me to my home,
I ne'er shall bend mine eyes on thee:

On thee, in whom at once conspire
All charms, which heedless hearts can move,
Whom but to see is to admire,
And, oh! forgive the word—to love.

Forgive the word, in one who ne'er
With such a word can more offend;
And since thy heart I cannot share,
Believe me, what I am, thy friend.

And who so cold as look on thee,
Thou lovely wanderer, and be less?
Nor be, what man should ever be,
The friend of Beauty in distress?

Ah! who would think that form had pass'd
Through Danger's most destructive path,
Had braved the death-wing'd tempest's blast,
And 'scaped a tyrant's fiercer wrath?

Lady! when I shall view the walls
Where free Byzantium once arose,
And Stamboul's Oriental halls
The Turkish tyrant's now enclose;

Though mightiest in the lists of fame
That glorious city still shall be;
On me 'twill hold a dearer claim,
As spot of thy nativity:

And though I bid thee now farewell,
When I behold that wondrous scene,
Since where thou art I may not dwell,
'Twill soothe to be, where thou hast been.

September, 1809.

STANZAS

COMPOSED DURING A THUNDER-STORM, AND WHILE BEWI'ERED NEAR MOUNT PINDUS IN ALBANIA.

Chill and murk is the nightly blast,
Where Pindus' mountains rise,
And angry clouds are pouring fast
The vengeance of the skies.

Our guides are gone, our hope is lost,
And lightnings, as they play,
But show where rocks our path have crost,
Or gild the torrent's spray.

Is yon a cot I saw, though low?
When lightning broke the gloom—
How welcome were its shade!—ah, no!
'Tis but a Turkish tomb.

Through sounds of foaming waterfalls,
I hear a voice exclaim—
My way-worn countryman, who calls
On distant England's name.

A shot is fired—by foe or friend?
Another—'tis to tell
The mountain-peasants to descend,
And lead us where they dwell.

Oh! who in such a night will dare
To tempt the wilderness?
And who 'mid thunder-peals can hear
Our signal of distress?

And who that heard our shouts would rise,
To try the dubious road?
Nor rather deem from nightly cries
That outlaws were abroad.

Clouds burst, skies flash, oh, dreadful hour!
More fiercely pours the storm!
Yet here one thought has still the power
To keep my bosom warm.

While wandering through each broken path
O'er brake and craggy brow;
While elements exhaust their wrath,
Sweet Florence, where art thou?

Not on the sea, not on the sea,
Thy bark hath long been gone:
Oh, may the storm that pours on me
Bow down my head alone!

Full swiftly blew the swift Siroc,
When last I press'd thy lip;
And long ere now, with foaming shock,
Impell'd thy gallant ship.

Now thou art safe; nay, long ere now
Hast trod the shore of Spain;
'Twere hard if aught so fair as thou
Should linger on the main.

And since I now remember thee
In darkness and in dread,
As in those hours of revelry
Which mirth and music sped;

Do thou, amid the fair white walls,
If Cadiz yet be free,
At times, from out her latticed halls,
Look o'er the dark blue sea;

Then think upon Calypso's isles,
Endear'd by days gone by;
To others give a thousand smiles,
To me a single sigh.

And when the admiring circle mark
The paleness of thy face,
A half-form'd tear, a transient spark
Of melancholy grace,

Again thou'lt smile, and blushing shun
Some coxcomb's raillery;
Nor own for once thou thought'st on one,
Who ever thinks on thee.

Though smile and sigh alike are vain,
When sever'd hearts repine,
My spirit flies o'er mount and main,
And mourns in search of thine.

ON BEING ASKED WHAT WAS THE "ORIGIN OF LOVE."

THE "Origin of Love!"—Ah, why
That cruel question ask of me,
When thou may'st read in many an eye
He starts to life on seeing thee?

And shouldst thou seek his *end* to know:
My heart forebodes, my fears foresee,
He'll linger long in silent woe;
But live—until I cease to be.

IMPROMPTU, IN REPLY TO A FRIEND.

WHEN, from the heart where Sorrow sits,
Her dusky shadow mounts too high,
And o'er the changing aspect flits,
And clouds the brow, or fills the eye;
Heed not that gloom, which soon shall sink:
My thoughts their dungeon know too well—
Back to my breast the wanderers shrink
And droop within their silent cell.

September, 1813.

TO SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.

ABSENT or present, still to thee,
My friend, what magic spells belong!
As all can tell, who share, like me,
In turn thy converse, and thy song.

But when the dreaded hour shall come,
By Friendship ever deem'd too nigh,
And "MEMORY" o'er her Druid's tomb
Shall weep that aught of thee can die,

How fondly will she then repay
Thy homage offer'd at her shrine,
And blend, while ages roll away,
Her name immortally with *thine!*

April 19, 1812.

CONDOLATORY ADDRESS

TO SARAH, COUNTESS OF JERSEY, ON THE PRINCE REGENT'S RETURNING HER PICTURE TO MRS. MEE.

WHEN the vain triumph of the imperial lord,
Whom servile Rome obey'd, and yet abhor'd,
Gave to the vulgar gaze each glorious bust,
That left a likeness of the brave, or just;
What most admired each scrutinizing eye
Of all that deck'd that passing pageantry?
What spread from face to face that wondering air?
The thought of Brutus—for his was not there!
That absence proved his worth,—that absence fix'd
His memory on the longing mind, unmix'd;

And more decreed his glory to endure
Than all a gold Colossus could secure.
If thus, fair Jersey, our desiring gaze
Search for thy form, in vain and mute amaze,
Amidst those pictured charms, whose loveliness,
Bright though they be, thine own had render'd less:
If he, that vain old man, whom truth admits
Heir of his father's crown, and of his wits,
If his corrupted eye, and wither'd heart,
Could with thy gentle image bear depart;
That tasteless shame be *his*, and ours the grief
To gaze on Beauty's band without its chief:
Yet comfort still one selfish thought imparts,
We lose the portrait, but preserve our hearts.
What can his vaulted gallery now disclose?
A garden with all flowers—except the rose;—
A fount that only wants its living stream;—
A night, with every star, save Dian's beam.
Lost to our eyes the present forms shall be,
That turn from tracing them to dream of thee;
And more on that recall'd resemblance pause,
Than all he *shall* not force on our applause.
Long may thy yet meridian lustre shine,
With all that Virtue asks of Homage thine:
The symmetry of youth—the grace of mien—
The eye that gladdens—and the brow serene;
The glossy darkness of that clustering hair,
Which shades, yet shows that forehead more than fair!
Each glance that wins us, and the life that throws
A spell which will not let our looks repose,
But turn to gaze again, and find anew
Some charm that well rewards another view.
These are not lessen'd, these are still as bright,
Albeit too dazzling for a dotard's sight;
And those must wait till every charm is gone,
To please the paltry heart that pleases none:—
That dull cold sensualist, whose sickly eye
In envious dimness pass'd thy portrait by;
Who rack'd his little spirit to combine
Its hate of *Freedom's* loveliness, and *thine*.

August, 1814.

STANZAS TO A LADY ON LEAVING ENGLAND.*

'Tis done—and shivering in the gale
The bark unfurls her snowy sail;
And whistling o'er the bending mast,
Loud sings on high the freshening blast;
And I must from this land be gone,
Because I cannot love but one.

But could I be what I have been,
And could I see what I have seen—
Could I repose upon the breast

* Mrs. Musters, formerly Mary Chaworth.

Which once my warmest wishes blest—
I should not seek another zone
Because I cannot love but one.

'Tis long since I beheld that eye
Which gave me bliss or misery;
And I have striven, but in vain,
Never to think of it again;
For though I fly from Albion,
I still can only love but one.

As some lone bird, without a mate,
My weary heart is desolate;
I look around, and cannot trace
One friendly smile, or welcome face,
And even in crowds am still alone,
Because I cannot love but one.

And I will cross the whitening foam,
And I will seek a foreign home;
Till I forget a false fair face,
I ne'er shall find a resting-place;
My own dark thoughts I cannot shun,
But ever love, and love but one.

The poorest, veriest wretch on earth
Still finds some hospitable hearth,
Where Friendship's or Love's softer glow
May smile in joy or soothe in woe;
But friend or lover I have none,
Because I cannot love but one.

I go—but wheresoe'er I flee,
There 's not an eye will weep for me;
There 's not a kind congenial heart,
Where I can claim the meanest part;
Nor thou, who hast my hopes undone,
Wilt sigh, although I love but one.

To think of every early scene,
Of what we are, and what we've been,
Would whelm some softer hearts with woe—
But mine, alas! has stood the blow;
Yet still beats on as it begun,
And never truly loves but one.

And who that dear loved one may be
Is not for vulgar eyes to see,
And why that early love was crost,
Thou know'st the best, I feel the most;
But few that dwell beneath the sun
Have loved so long, and loved but one.

I've tried another's fetters too,
With charms perchance as fair to view;
And I would fain have loved as well,
But some unconquerable spell
Forbade my bleeding breast to own
A kindred care for aught but one.

'Twould soothe to take one lingering view,
And bless thee in my last adieu;
Yet wish I not those eyes to weep
For him that wanders o'er the deep;
Though wheresoe'er my bark may run,
I love but thee, I love but one.

1809.

THE FAREWELL.

TO A LADY.

When Man, expell'd from Eden's bowers,
A moment linger'd near the gate,
Each scene recall'd the vanish'd hours,
And bade him curse his future fate.

But, wandering on through distant climes,
He learnt to bear his load of grief;
Just gave a sigh to other times,
And found in busier scenes relief.

Thus, lady! will it be with me,
And I must view thy charms no more;
For, whilst I linger near to thee,
I sigh for all I knew before.

In flight I shall be surely wise,
Escaping from temptation's snare;
I cannot view my paradise
Without a wish to enter there.

December 2, 1808.

WHEN WE TWO PARTED.

When we two parted
In silence and tears,
Half broken-hearted,
To sever for years,
Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
Colder thy kiss;
Truly that hour foretold
Sorrow to this.

The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow—
It felt like the warning
Of what I feel now.
Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame;
I hear thy name spoken,
And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear;
A shudder comes o'er me—
Why wert thou so dear?

They know not I knew thee,
Who knew thee too well:—
Long, long shall I rue thee,
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met—
In silence I grieve,
That thy heart could forget,
Thy spirit deceive.
If I should meet thee
After long years,
How should I greet thee?—
With silence and tears.

1808.

LINES TO A LADY WEEPING.*

WEEP, daughter of a royal line,
A sire's disgrace, a realm's decay;
Ah! happy if each tear of thine
Could wash a father's fault away!
Weep—for thy tears are Virtue's tears—
Auspicious to these suffering isles;
And be each drop in future years
Repaid thee by thy people's smiles!

March, 1812.

WINDSOR POETICS.

Lines composed on the occasion of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent being seen standing between the coffins of Henry VIII. and Charles I., in the royal vault at Windsor.

FAMED for contemptuous breach of sacred ties,
By headless Charles here heartless Henry lies;
Between them stands another sceptred thing—
It moves, it reigns—in all but name, a king:
Charles to his people, Henry to his wife,
—In him the double tyrant starts to life:
Justice and death have mix'd their dust in vain,
Each royal vampire wakes to life again.
Ah, what can tombs avail!—since these disgorge
The blood and dust of both—to mould a George.

ELEGIAC STANZAS

ON THE DEATH OF SIR PETER PARKER, BART.

THERE is a tear for all that die,
A mourner o'er the humblest grave;
But nations swell the funeral cry,
And Triumph weeps above the brave.

* The Princess Charlotte.

For them is Sorrow's purest sigh
O'er Ocean's heaving bosom sent:
In vain their bones unburied lie,
All earth becomes their monument!

A tomb is theirs on every page,
An epitaph on every tongue:
The present hours, the future age,
For them bewail, to them belong.

For them the voice of festal mirth
Grows hush'd, *their name* the only sound;
While deep Remembrance pours to Worth
The goblet's tributary round.

A theme to crowds that knew them not,
Lamented by admiring foes,
Who would not share their glorious lot?
Who would not die the death they chose?

And, gallant Parker! thus enshrined
Thy life, thy fall, thy fame shall be;
And early valor, glowing, find
A model in thy memory.

But there are breasts that bleed with thee
In woe, that glory cannot quell;
And shuddering hear of victory,
Where one so dear, so dauntless, fell.

Where shall they turn to mourn thee less?
When cease to hear thy cherish'd name?
Time cannot teach forgetfulness,
While Grief's full heart is fed by Fame.

Alas! for them, though not for thee,
They cannot choose but weep the more;
Deep for the dead the grief must be,
Who ne'er gave cause to mourn before.

A FRAGMENT.

Could I remount the river of my years,
To the first fountain of our smiles and tears,
I would not trace again the stream of hours
Between their outworn banks of wither'd flowers,
But bid it flow as now—until it glides
Into the number of the nameless tides. . . .

What is this Death?—a quiet of the heart?
The whole of that of which we are a part?
For life is but a vision—what I see
Of all which lives alone is life to me,
And being so—the absent are the dead,
Who haunt us from tranquillity, and spread
A dreary shroud around us, and invest
With sad remembrancers our hours of rest.

The absent are the dead, for they are cold,
And ne'er can be what once we did behold;
And they are changed, and cheerless,—or if yet
The unforgotten do not all forget,
Since thus divided—equal must it be
If the deep barrier be of earth, or sea;
It may be both—but one day end it must,
In the dark union of insensate dust.

The under-earth inhabitants—are they
But mingled millions decomposed to clay?
The ashes of a thousand ages spread
Wherever man has trodden or shall tread?
Or do they in their silent cities dwell
Each in his incommunicative cell?
Or have they their own language? and a sense
Of breathless being?—darken'd and intense
As midnight in her solitude?—O Earth!
Where are the past?—and wherefore had they birth?
The dead are thy inheritors—and we
But bubbles on thy surface; and the key
Of thy profundity is in the grave,
The ebon portal of thy peopled cave,
Where I would walk in spirit, and behold
Our elements resolved to things untold,
And fathom hidden wonders, and explore
The essence of great bosoms now no more. . . .

DIODATI, *July*, 1816.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

"O Lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros
Ducentium ortus ex animo: quater
Felix! in imo qui scatentem
Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit."
GRAY'S *Poemata.*

THERE'S not a joy the world can give like that it takes away,
When the glow of early thought declines in feeling's dull decay;
'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone, which fades so fast,
But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth itself be past.

Then the few whose spirits float above the wreck of happiness
Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt or ocean of excess:
The magnet of their course is gone, or only points in vain
The shore to which their shiver'd sail shall never stretch again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like death itself comes down;
It cannot feel for others' woes, it dare not dream its own;
That heavy chill has frozen o'er the fountain of our tears,
And though the eye may sparkle still, 'tis where the ice appears.

Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and mirth distract the breast,
Through midnight hours that yield no more their former hope of rest,
'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruin'd turret wreathe,
All green and wildly-fresh without, but worn and gray beneath.

Oh! could I feel as I have felt,—or be what I have been,
Or weep as I could once have wept, o'er many a vanish'd scene;
As springs in deserts found seem sweet, all brackish though they be,
So 'midst the wither'd waste of life, those tears would flow to me.

March, 1815.

FILL THE GOBLET AGAIN.

A SONG.

FILL the goblet again! for I never before
Felt the glow which now gladdens my heart to its core;
Let us drink!—who would not?—since, through life's varied round,
In the goblet alone no deception is found.

I have tried in its turn all that life can supply:
I have bask'd in the beam of a dark rolling eye;
I have loved!—who has not?—but what heart can declare,
That pleasure existed while passion was there?

In the days of my youth, when the heart's in its spring,
And dreams that affection can never take wing,
I had friends!—who has not?—but what tongue will avow
That friends, rosy wine! are as faithful as thou?

The heart of a mistress some boy may estrange,
Friendship shifts with the sunbeam—thou never canst change:
Thou grow'st old—who does not?—but on earth what appears,
Whose virtues, like thine, still increase with its years?

Yet if blest to the utmost that love can bestow,
Should a rival bow down to our idol below,
We are jealous!—who 's not?—thou hast no such alloy;
For the more that enjoy thee, the more we enjoy.

Then the season of youth and its vanities past,
For refuge we fly to the goblet at last;
There we find—do we not?—in the flow of the soul,
That truth, as of yore, is confined to the bowl.

When the box of Pandora was open'd on earth,
And Misery's triumph commenced over Mirth,
Hope was left—was she not?—but the goblet we kiss,
And care not for Hope, who are certain of bliss.

Long life to the grape!—for when summer is flown,
The age of our nectar shall gladden our own:
We must die—who shall not?—May our sins be forgiven,
And Hebe shall never be idle in heaven.

REMEMBER THEE! REMEMBER THEE!

REMEMBER thee! remember thee!
Till Lethe quench life's burning stream
Remorse and shame shall cling to thee,
And haunt thee like a feverish dream!

Remember thee! Ay, doubt it not,
Thy husband too shall think of thee:
By neither shalt thou be forgot,
Thou *false* to him, thou *fiend* to me!

ON A CORNELIAN HEART WHICH WAS BROKEN.

ILL-FATED Heart! and can it be
That thou shouldst thus be rent in twain?
Have years of care for thine and thee
Alike been all employ'd in vain?

Yet precious seems each shatter'd part,
And every fragment dearer grown,
Since he who wears thee feels thou art
A fitter emblem of *his own*.

MONODY

ON THE DEATH OF THE RT. HON. R. B. SHERIDAN,

SPOKEN AT DRURY-LANE THEATRE.

WHEN the last sunshine of expiring day
In summer's twilight weeps itself away,
Who hath not felt the softness of the hour
Sink on the heart, as dew along the flower?
With a pure feeling which absorbs and awes
While Nature makes that melancholy pause,
Her breathing moment on the bridge where Time
Of light and darkness forms an arch sublime,
Who hath not shared that calm so still and deep,
The voiceless thought which would not speak but weep,
A holy concord—and a bright regret,
A glorious sympathy with suns that set?
'Tis not harsh sorrow—but a tenderer woe,
Nameless, but dear to gentle hearts below,
Felt without bitterness—but full and clear,
A sweet dejection—a transparent tear,
Unmix'd with worldly grief or selfish stain,
Shed without shame—and secret without pain.

Even as the tenderness that hour instils
When summer's day declines along the hills,
So feels the fulness of our heart and eyes,
When all of Genius which can perish dies.
A mighty Spirit is eclipsed—a Power
Hath pass'd from day to darkness—to whose hour
Of light no likeness is bequeath'd—no name,
Focus at once of all the rays of Fame!
The flash of Wit—the bright Intelligence,
The beam of Song—the blaze of Eloquence,
Set with their Sun—but still have left behind
The enduring produce of immortal Mind;
Fruits of a genial morn, and glorious noon,
A deathless part of him who died too soon.
But small that portion of the wondrous whole,
These sparkling segments of that circling soul,
Which all embraced—and lighten'd over all,
To cheer—to pierce—to please—or to appall.

From the charm'd council to the festive board,
Of human feelings the unbounded lord;
In whose acclaim the loftiest voices vied,
The praised—the proud—who made his praise their pride
When the loud cry of trampled Hindostan
Arose to Heaven in her appeal from man,
His was the thunder—his the avenging rod,
The wrath—the delegated voice of God!
Which shook the nations through his lips—and blazed
Till vanquish'd senates trembled as they praised.

And here, oh! here, where yet all young and warm,
The gay creations of his spirit charm,
The matchless dialogue—the deathless wit,
Which knew not what it was to intermit;
The glowing portraits, fresh from life, that bring
Home to our hearts the truth from which they spring;
These wondrous beings of his Fancy, wrought
To fulness by the fiat of his thought,
Here in their first abode you still may meet,
Bright with the hues of his Promethean heat:
A halo of the light of other days,
Which still the splendor of its orb betrays.

But should there be to whom the fatal blight
Of failing Wisdom yields a base delight,
Men who exult when minds of heavenly tone
Jar in the music which was born their own,
Still let them pause—ah! little do they know
That what to them seem'd Vice might be but Woe.
Hard is his fate on whom the public gaze
Is fix'd for ever to detract or praise;
Repose denies her requiem to his name,
And Folly loves the martyrdom of Fame.
The secret enemy whose sleepless eye
Stands sentinel—accuser—judge—and spy,
The foe—the fool—the jealous—and the vain,
The envious who but breathe in others' pain,
Behold the host! delighting to deprave,
Who track the steps of glory to the grave,
Watch every fault that daring Genius owes
Half to the ardor which its birth bestows,
Distort the truth, accumulate the lie,
And pile the pyramid of Calumny!
These are his portion—but if join'd to these
Gaunt Poverty should league with deep Disease,
If the high Spirit must forget to soar,
And stoop to strive with Misery at the door,
To soothe Indignity—and face to face
Meet sordid Rage—and wrestle with Disgrace,
To find in Hope but the renew'd caress,
The serpent-fold of further Faithlessness:—
If such may be the ills which men assail,
What marvel if at last the mightiest fail?
Breasts to whom all the strength of feeling given
Bear hearts electric—charged with fire from heaven,

Black with the rude collision, inly torn,
By clouds surrounded, and on whirlwinds borne,
Driven o'er the lowering atmosphere that nurst
Thoughts which have turn'd to thunder—scorch—and burst.

But far from us and from our mimic scene
Such things should be—if such have ever been;
Ours be the gentler wish, the kinder task,
To give the tribute Glory need not ask,
To mourn the vanish'd beam—and add our mite
Of praise in payment of a long delight.
Ye Orators! whom yet our councils yield,
Mourn for the veteran Hero of your field!
The worthy rival of the wondrous *Three!*
Whose words were sparks of Immortality!
Ye Bards! to whom the Drama's Muse is dear,
He was your master—emulate him *here!*
Ye men of wit and social eloquence!
He was your brother—bear his ashes hence!
While powers of mind almost of boundless range,
Complete in kind, as various in their change,
While Eloquence—Wit—Poesy—and Mirth,
That humble Harmonist of care on Earth,
Survive within our souls—while lives our sense
Of pride in Merit's proud pre-eminence,
Long shall we seek his likeness—long in vain,
And turn to all of him which may remain,
Sighing that Nature form'd but one such man,
And broke the die—in moulding Sheridan.

DIODATI, *July* 17, 1816.

ADDRESS,

SPOKEN AT THE OPENING OF DRURY-LANE THEATRE, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1812.

IN one dread night our city saw, and sigh'd,
Bow'd to the dust, the Drama's tower of pride;
In one short hour beheld the blazing fane,
Apollo sink, and Shakspeare cease to reign.

Ye who beheld (oh! sight admired and mourn'd,
Whose radiance mock'd the ruin it adorn'd!)
Through clouds of fire the massive fragments riven,
Like Israel's pillar, chase the night from heaven:
Saw the long column of revolving flames
Shake its red shadow o'er the startled Thames,
While thousands, throng'd around the burning dome,
Shrank back appall'd, and trembled for their home,
As glared the volumed blaze, and ghastly shone
The skies, with lightnings awful as their own,
Till blackening ashes and the lonely wall
Usurp'd the Muse's realm, and mark'd her fall;
Say—shall this new, nor less aspiring pile,
Rear'd where once rose the mightiest in our isle,
Know the same favor which the former knew,
A shrine for Shakspeare—worthy him and *you?*

Yes—it shall be—the magic of that name
Defies the scythe of Time, the torch of Flame;
On the same spot still consecrates the scene,
And bids the Drama *be* where she hath *been:*
This fabric's birth attests the potent spell—
Indulge our honest pride, and say, *How well!*

As soars this fane to emulate the last,
Oh! might we draw our omens from the past,
Some hour propitious to our prayers may boast
Names such as hallow still the dome we lost.
On Drury first your Siddons' thrilling art
O'erwhelm'd the gentlest, storm'd the sternest heart.
On Drury, Garrick's latest laurels grew;
Here your last tears retiring Roscius drew:
Sigh'd his last thanks, and wept his last adieu;
But still for living wit the wreaths may bloom,
That only waste their odors o'er the tomb.
Such Drury claim'd and claims—nor you refuse
One tribute to revive his slumbering muse;
With garlands deck your own Menander's head!
Nor hoard your honors idly for the dead!

Dear are the days which made our annals bright,
Ere Garrick fled, or Brinsley ceased to write.
Heirs to their labors, like all high-born heirs,
Vain of *our* ancestry as they of *theirs:*
While thus Remembrance borrows Banquo's glass
To claim the sceptred shadows as they pass,
And we the mirror hold, where imaged shine
Immortal names, emblazon'd on our line,
Pause—ere their feebler offspring you condemn,
Reflect how hard the task to rival them!

Friends of the stage! to whom both Players and Plays
Must sue alike for pardon or for praise,
Whose judging voice and eye alone direct
The boundless power to cherish or reject;
If e'er frivolity has led to fame,
And made us blush that you forbore to blame;
If e'er the sinking stage could condescend
To soothe the sickly taste it dare not mend,
All past reproach may present scenes refute,
And censure, wisely loud, be justly mute!
Oh! since your fiat stamps the Drama's laws,
Forbear to mock us with misplaced applause;
So pride shall doubly nerve the actor's powers,
And reason's voice be echoed back by ours!

This greeting o'er, the ancient rule obey'd,
The Drama's homage by her herald paid,
Receive *our* welcome too, whose every tone
Springs from our hearts, and fain would win your own.
The curtain rises—may our stage unfold
Scenes not unworthy Drury's days of old!
Britons our judges, Nature for our guide,
Still may *we* please—long, long may *you* preside.

ON REVISITING HARROW.*

HERE once engaged the stranger's view,
Young Friendship's record simply traced;
Few were her words, but yet, though few,
Resentment's hand the line defaced.

Deeply she cut—but not erased,
The characters were still so plain,
That Friendship once return'd and gazed —
Till Memory hail'd the words again.

Repentance placed them as before;
Forgiveness join'd her gentle name;
So fair the inscription seem'd once more,
That Friendship thought it still the same.

Thus might the record now have been;
But, ah! in spite of Hope's endeavor,
Or Friendship's tears, Pride rush'd between,
And blotted out the line for ever.

THE ADIEU.

WRITTEN UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT THE AUTHOR WOULD SOON DIE.

ADIEU, thou Hill! where early joy
Spread roses o'er my brow;
Where Science seeks each loitering boy
With knowledge to endow.
Adieu, my youthful friends or foes,
Partners of former bliss or woes;
No more through Ida's paths we stray;
Soon must I share the gloomy cell,
Whose ever-slumbering inmates dwell
Unconscious of the day.

Adieu, ye hoary Regal Fanes,
Ye spires of Granta's vale,
Where Learning robed in sable reigns,
And Melancholy pale.
Ye comrades of the jovial hour,
Ye tenants of the classic bower,
On Cama's verdant margin placed,
Adieu! while memory still is mine,
For, offerings on Oblivion's shrine,
These scenes must be effaced.

Adieu, ye mountains of the clime
Where grew my youthful years;
Where Loch na Garr in snows sublime
His giant summit rears.

* Some years ago, when at Harrow, a friend of the author engraved on a particular spot the names of both, with a few additional words, as a memorial. Afterwards, on receiving some real or imagined injury, the author destroyed the frail record before he left Harrow. On revisiting the place in 1807, he wrote under it these stanzas.

Why did my childhood wander forth
From you, the regions of the North,
With sons of pride to roam?
Why did I quit my Highland cave,
Marr's dusky heath, and Dee's clear wave,
To seek a Sotheron home!

Hall of my Sires! a long farewell—
Yet why to thee adieu?
Thy vaults will echo back my knell,
Thy towers my tomb will view:
The faltering tongue which sung thy fall,
And former glories of thy Hall,
Forgets its wonted simple note—
But yet the Lyre retains the strings,
And sometimes, on Æolian wings,
In dying strains may float.

Fields, which surround yon rustic cot,
While yet I linger here,
Adieu! you are not now forgot,
To retrospection dear.
Streamlet! along whose rippling surge
My youthful limbs were wont to urge,
At noontide heat, their pliant course;
Plunging with ardor from the shore,
Thy springs will lave these limbs no more,
Deprived of active force.

And shall I here forget the scene
Still nearest to my breast?
Rocks rise and rivers roll between
The spot which passion blest;
Yet, Mary, all thy beauties seem
Fresh as in Love's bewitching dream,
To me in smiles display'd;
Till slow disease resigns his prey
To Death, the parent of decay,
Thine image cannot fade.

And thou, my Friend! whose gentle love
Yet thrills my bosom's chords,
How much thy friendship was above
Description's power of words!
Still near my breast thy gift I wear
Which sparkled once with Feeling's tear,
Of Love the pure, the sacred gem;
Our souls were equal, and our lot
In that dear moment quite forgot;
Let Pride alone condemn!

All, all is dark and cheerless now!
No smile of Love's deceit
Can warm my veins with wonted glow,
Can bid Life's pulses beat:
Not e'en the hope of future fame
Can wake my faint, exhausted frame,

Or crown with fancied wreaths my head:
Mine is a short, inglorious race,—
To humble in the dust my face,
And mingle with the dead.

O Fame! thou goddess of my heart,
On him who gains thy praise,
Pointless must fall the Spectre's dart,
Consumed in Glory's blaze;
But me she beckons from the earth,
My name obscure, unmark'd my birth,
My life a short and vulgar dream:
Lost in the dull, ignoble crowd,
My hopes recline within a shroud,
My fate is Lethe's stream.

When I repose beneath the sod,
Unheeded in the clay,
Where once my playful footsteps trod,
Where now my head must lay,
The meed of Pity will be shed
In dewdrops o'er my narrow bed,
By nightly skies, and storms alone;
No mortal eye will deign to steep
With tears the dark sepulchral deep
Which hides a name unknown.

Forget this world, my restless sprite,
Turn, turn thy thoughts to Heaven:
There must thou soon direct thy flight,
If errors are forgiven.
To bigots and to sects unknown,
Bow down beneath the Almighty's Throne;
To Him address thy trembling prayer:
He, who is merciful and just,
Will not reject a child of dust,
Although his meanest care.

Father of Light! to thee I call;
My soul is dark within:
Thou who canst mark the sparrow's fall,
Avert the death of sin.
Thou, who canst guide the wandering star,
Who calm'st the elemental war,
Whose mantle is yon boundless sky,
My thoughts, my words, my crimes forgive:
And, since I soon must cease to live,
Instruct me how to die.

FAREWELL TO THE MUSE.

Thou Power! who hast ruled me through infancy's days,
Young offspring of fancy, 'tis time we should part;
Then rise on the gale this the last of my lays,
The coldest effusion which springs from my heart.

This bosom, responsive to rapture no more,
Shall hush thy wild notes, nor implore thee to sing;
The feelings of childhood which taught thee to soar,
Are wafted far distant on Apathy's wing.

Though simple the themes of my rude flowing Lyre,
Yet even these themes are departed for ever;
No more beam the eyes which my dream could inspire,
My visions are flown, to return—alas! never.

When drain'd is the nectar which gladdens the bowl,
How vain is the effort delight to prolong!
When cold is the beauty which dwelt in my soul,
What magic of fancy can lengthen my song?

Can the lips sing of Love in the desert alone,
Of kisses and smiles which they now must resign?
Or dwell with delight on the hours that are flown?
Ah, no! for those hours can no longer be mine.

Can they speak of the friends that I lived but to love?
Ah, surely affection ennobles the strain!
But how can my numbers in sympathy move,
When I scarcely can hope to behold them again?

Can I sing of the deeds which my Fathers have done,
And raise my loud harp to the fame of my Sires?
For glories like theirs, oh, how faint is my tone!
For Heroes' exploits how unequal my fires!

Untouch'd, then, my Lyre shall reply to the blast—
'Tis hush'd, and my feeble endeavors are o'er;
And those who have heard it will pardon the past,
When they know that its murmurs shall vibrate no more.

And soon shall its wild erring notes be forgot,
Since early affection and love are o'ercast:
Oh! blest had my fate been, and happy my lot,
Had the first strain of love been the dearest, the last.

Farewell, my young Muse! since we now can ne'er meet;
If our songs have been languid, they surely are few;
Let us hope that the present at least will be sweet—
The present—which seals our eternal adieu.

TO AN OAK AT NEWSTEAD.

Young Oak! when I planted thee deep in the ground,
I hoped that thy days would be longer than mine;
That thy dark-waving branches would flourish around,
And ivy thy trunk with its mantle entwine.

Such, such was my hope, when in infancy's years,
On the land of my fathers I rear'd thee with pride;
They are past, and I water thy stem with my tears,—
Thy decay not the weeds that surround thee can hide.

I left thee, my Oak, and, since that fatal hour,
A stranger has dwelt in the hall of my sire;
Till manhood shall crown me, not mine is the power,
But his, whose neglect may have bade thee expire.

Oh! hardy thou wert—even now little care
Might revive thy young head, and thy wounds gently heal:
But thou wert not fated affection to share—
For who could suppose that a stranger would feel!

Ah, droop not, my Oak! lift thy head for a while;
Ere twice round yon Glory this planet shall run,
The hand of thy Master will teach thee to smile,
When Infancy's years of probation are done.

Oh, live then, my Oak! tow'r aloft from the weeds
That clog thy young growth, and assist thy decay,
For still in thy bosom are life's early seeds,
And still may thy branches their beauty display.

Oh! yet, if maturity's years may be thine,
Though *I* shall lie low in the cavern of death,
On thy leaves yet the day-beam of ages may shine,
Uninjured by time, or the rude winter's breath.

For centuries still may thy boughs lightly wave
O'er the corse of thy lord in thy canopy laid;
While the branches thus gratefully shelter his grave,
The chief who survives may recline in thy shade.

And as he, with his boys, shall revisit this spot,
He will tell them in whispers more softly to tread.
Oh! surely, by these I shall ne'er be forgot;
Remembrance still hallows the dust of the dead.

And here, will they say, when in life's glowing prime,
Perhaps he has pour'd forth his young simple lay,
And here must he sleep, till the moments of time
Are lost in the hours of Eternity's day.

EPISTLE TO A FRIEND,

IN ANSWER TO SOME LINES EXHORTING THE AUTHOR TO BE CHEERFUL, AND TO "BANISH CARE."

"Oh! banish care"—such ever be
The motto of *thy* revelry!
Perchance of *mine*, when wassail nights
Renew those riotous delights,
Wherewith the children of Despair
Lull the lone heart, and "banish care."
But not in morn's reflecting hour,
When present, past, and future lower,
When all I loved is changed or gone,
Mock with such taunts the woes of one,
Whose every thought—but let them pass—
Thou know'st I am not what I was.

But, above all, if thou wouldst hold
Place in a heart that ne'er was cold,
By all the powers that men revere,
By all unto thy bosom dear,
Thy joys below, thy hopes above,
Speak—speak of anything but love.

'Twere long to tell, and vain to hear,
The tale of one who scorns a tear;
And there is little in that tale
Which better bosoms would bewail.
But mine has suffer'd more than well
'Twould suit philosophy to tell.
I've seen my bride another's bride,—
Have seen her seated by his side,—
Have seen the infant which she bore,
Wear the sweet smile the mother wore,
When she and I in youth have smiled,
As fond and faultless as her child;
Have seen her eyes, in cold disdain,
Ask if I felt no secret pain;
And *I* have acted well my part,
And made my cheek belie my heart,
Return'd the freezing glance she gave,
Yet felt the while *that* woman's slave,—
Have kiss'd, as if without design,
The babe which ought to have been mine,
And show'd, alas! in each caress
Time had not made me love the less.

But let this pass—I'll whine no more,
Nor seek again an eastern shore;
The world befits a busy brain,—
I'll hie me to its haunts again.
But if, in some succeeding year,
When Britain's "May is in the sere,"
Thou hear'st of one whose deepening crimes
Suit with the sablest of the times,
Of one, whom love nor pity sways,
Nor hope of fame, nor good men's praise;
One, who in stern ambition's pride,
Perchance not blood shall turn aside;
One rank'd in some recording page
With the worst anarchs of the age,
Him wilt thou *know*—and *knowing* pause,
Nor with the *effect* forget the cause.

NEWSTEAD ABBEY, *October* 11, 1811.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

I SPEAK not, I trace not, I breathe not thy name;
There is grief in the sound, there is guilt in the fame:
But the tear which now burns on my cheek may impart
The deep thoughts that dwell in that silence of heart.

Too brief for our passion, too long for our peace,
Were those hours—can their joy or their bitterness cease?
We repent, we abjure, we will break from our chain,—
We will part, we will fly to—unite it again!

Oh! thine be the gladness, and mine be the guilt!
Forgive me, adored one!—forsake if thou wilt;
But the heart which is thine shall expire undebased,
And *man* shall not break it—whatever *thou* may'st.

And stern to the haughty, but humble to thee,
This soul in its bitterest blackness shall be;
And our days seem as swift, and our moments more sweet,
With thee by my side, than with worlds at our feet.

One sigh of thy sorrow, one look of thy love,
Shall turn me or fix, shall reward or reprove;
And the heartless may wonder at all I resign—
Thy lip shall reply, not to them, but to mine.

ADDRESS

INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN RECITED AT THE CALEDONIAN MEETING, 1814.

Who hath not glow'd above the page where fame
Hath fix'd high Caledon's unconquer'd name:
The mountain land which spurn'd the Roman chain,
And baffled back the fiery-crested Dane:
Whose bright claymore and hardihood of hand
No foe could tame—no tyrant could command!
That race is gone—but still their children breathe,
And glory crowns them with redoubled wreath:
O'er Gael and Saxon mingling banners shine,
And, England! add their stubborn strength to thine.
The blood which flow'd with Wallace flows as free,
But now 'tis only shed for fame and thee!
Oh! pass not by the northern veteran's claim,
But give support—the world hath given him fame!

The humbler ranks, the lowly brave, who bled
While cheerly following where the mighty led—
Who sleep beneath the undistinguish'd sod
Where happier comrades in their triumph trod,
To us bequeath'd—'tis all their fate allows—
The sireless offspring and the lonely spouse:
She on high Albyn's dusky hills may raise
The tearful eye in melancholy gaze;
Or view, while shadowy auguries disclose,
The Highland seer's anticipated woes,
The bleeding phantom of each martial form,
Dim in the cloud, or darkling in the storm;
While sad she chants the solitary song,
The soft lament for him who tarries long—
For him whose distant relics vainly crave
The coronach's wild requiem to the brave!

'Tis heaven—not man—must charm away the woe,
Which bursts when Nature's feelings newly flow,
Yet tenderness and time may rob the tear
Of half its bitterness, for one so dear;
A nation's gratitude perchance may spread
A thornless pillow for the widow'd head;
May lighten well her heart's maternal care,
And wean from penury the soldier's heir.

TO BELSHAZZAR.

Belshazzar! from the banquet turn,
Nor in thy sensual fulness fall;
Behold! while yet before thee burn
The graven words, the glowing wall,
Many a despot men miscall
Crown'd and anointed from on high;
But thou, the weakest, worst of all—
Is it not written, thou must die?

Go! dash the roses from thy brow—
Gray hairs but poorly wreathe with them:
Youth's garlands misbecome thee now,
More than thy very diadem,
Where thou hast tarnish'd every gem:—
Then throw the worthless bauble by,
Which, worn by thee, e'en slaves contemn;
And learn like better men to die!

Oh! early in the balance weigh'd,
And ever light of word and worth,
Whose soul expired ere youth decay'd,
And left thee but a mass of earth.
To see thee moves the scorner's mirth:
But tears in Hope's averted eye
Lament that even thou hadst birth—
Unfit to govern, live, or die.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

They say that Hope is happiness;
But genuine Love must prize the past,
And Memory wakes the thoughts that bless:
They rose the first—they set the last;

And all that Memory loves the most
Was once our only Hope to be,
And all that Hope adored and lost
Hath melted into Memory.

Alas! it is delusion all;
The future cheats us from afar,
Nor can we be what we recall,
Nor dare we think on what we are.

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE:

A ROMAUNT.

"L'univers est une espèce de livre, dont on n'a lu que la première page quand on n'a vu que son pays. J'en ai feuilleté un assez grand nombre, que j'ai trouvé également mauvaises. Cet examen ne m'a point été infructueux. Je haïssais ma patrie. Toutes les impertinences des peuples divers, parmi lesquels j'ai vécu, m'ont reconcilié avec elle. Quand je n'aurais tiré d'autre bénéfice de mes voyages que celui-là, je n'en regretterais ni les frais ni les fatigues." — LE COSMOPOLITE.

PREFACE

[TO THE FIRST AND SECOND CANTOS].

THE following poem was written, for the most part, amidst the scenes which it attempts to describe. It was begun in Albania; and the parts relative to Spain and Portugal were composed from the author's observations in these countries. Thus much it may be necessary to state for the correctness of the descriptions. The scenes attempted to be sketched are in Spain, Portugal, Epirus, Acarnania, and Greece. There, for the present, the poem stops: its reception will determine whether the author may venture to conduct his readers to the capital of the East, through Ionia and Phrygia: these two Cantos are merely experimental.

A fictitious character is introduced for the sake of giving some connection to the piece; which, however, makes no pretensions to regularity. It has been suggested to me by friends, on whose opinions I set a high value, that in this fictitious character, "Childe Harold," I may incur the suspicion of having intended some real personage: this I beg leave, once for all, to disclaim—Harold is the child of imagination, for the purpose I have stated. In some very trivial particulars, and those merely local, there might be grounds for such a notion; but in the main points, I should hope, none whatever.

It is almost superfluous to mention that the appellation "Childe," as "Childe Waters," "Childe Childers," &c., is used as more consonant with the old structure of versification which I have adopted. The "Good Night," in the beginning of the first Canto, was suggested by "Lord Maxwell's Good Night," in the Border Minstrelsy, edited by Mr. Scott.

With the different poems which have been published on Spanish subjects, there may be found some slight coincidence in the first part which treats of the Peninsula, but it can only be casual; as, with the exception of a few concluding stanzas, the whole of this poem was written in the Levant.

The stanza of Spenser, according to one of our most successful poets, admits of every variety. Dr. Beattie makes the following observation:—"Not long ago, I began a poem in the style and stanza of Spenser, in which I propose to give full scope to my inclination, and be either droll or pathetic, descriptive or sentimental, tender or satirical, as the humor strikes me; for, if I mistake not, the measure which I have adopted admits equally of all these kinds of composition." Strengthened in my opinion by such authority, and by the example of some of the highest order of Italian poets, I shall make no apology for attempts at similar variations in the following composition; satisfied that, if they are unsuccessful, their failure must be in the execution, rather than in the design, sanctioned by the practice of Ariosto, Thomson, and Beattie.

LONDON, *February*, 1812.

ADDITION TO THE PREFACE.

I have now waited till almost all our periodical journals have distributed their usual portion of criticism. To the justice of the generality of their criticisms I have nothing to object; it would ill become me to quarrel with their very slight degree of censure, when, perhaps, if they had been less kind, they had been more candid. Returning, therefore, to all and each my best thanks for their liberality, on one point alone shall I venture an observation. Amongst the many objections justly urged to the very indifferent character of the "vagrant Childe," (whom, notwithstanding many hints to the contrary, I still maintain to be a fictitious personage,) it has been stated, that, besides the anachronism, he is very *unknightly*, as the times of the Knights were times of Love, Honor, and so forth. Now, it so happens that the good old times, when "l'amour du bon vieux temps, l'amour antique" flourished, were the most profligate of all possible centuries. Those who have any doubts on this subject may consult Sainte-Palaye, *passim*, and more particularly vol. ii. p. 68. The vows of chivalry were no better kept than any other vows whatsoever; and the songs of the Troubadours were not more decent, and certainly were much less refined, than those of Ovid. The "Cours d'amour, parlemens d'amour, ou de courtesie et de gentillesse," had much more of love than of courtesy or gentleness. See Roland on the same subject with Sainte-Palaye. Whatever other objection may be urged to that most unamiable personage, Childe Harold, he was so far perfectly knightly in his attributes—"No waiter, but a knight templar." * By the by, I fear that Sir Tristrem and Sir Lancelot were no better than they should be, although very poetical personages and true knights, "sans peur," though not "sans reproche." If the story of the institution of the "Garter" be not a fable, the knights of that order have for several centuries borne the badge of a Countess of Salisbury, of indifferent memory. So much for chivalry. Burke need not have regretted that its days are over, though Marie-Antoinette was quite as chaste as most of those in whose honors lances were shivered, and knights unhorsed.

Before the days of Bayard, and down to those of Sir Joseph Banks (the most chaste and celebrated of ancient and modern times), few exceptions will be found to this statement; and I fear a little investigation will teach us not to regret these monstrous mummeries of the middle ages.

I now leave "Childe Harold" to live his day, such as he is; it had been more

* "The Rovers, or the Double Arrangement."

agreeable, and certainly more easy, to have drawn an amiable character. It had been easy to varnish over his faults, to make him do more and express less; but he never was intended as an example, further than to show that early perversion of mind and morals leads to satiety of past pleasures and disappointment in new ones, and that even the beauties of nature, and the stimulus of travel (except ambition, the most powerful of all excitements), are lost on a soul so constituted, or rather misdirected. Had I proceeded with the poem, this character would have deepened as he drew to the close; for the outline which I once meant to fill up for him was, with some exceptions, the sketch of a modern Timon, perhaps a poetical Zeluco.

LONDON, 1813.

TO IANTHE.

Not in those climes where I have late been straying,
Though Beauty long hath there been matchless deem'd,
Not in those visions to the heart displaying
Forms which it sighs but to have only dream'd,
Hath aught like thee in truth or fancy seem'd:
Nor, having seen thee, shall I vainly seek
To paint those charms which varied as they beam'd;
To such as see thee not my words were weak;
To those who gaze on thee what language could they speak?

Ah! may'st thou ever be what now thou art,
Nor unbeseem the promise of thy spring,
As fair in form, as warm yet pure in heart,
Love's image upon earth without his wing,
And guileless beyond Hope's imagining!
And surely she who now so fondly rears
Thy youth, in thee, thus hourly brightening,
Behold the rainbow of her future years,
Before whose heavenly hues all sorrow disappears.

Young Peri of the West!—'tis well for me
My years already doubly number thine;
My loveless eye unmoved may gaze on thee,
And safely view thy ripening beauties shine:
Happy, I ne'er shall see them in decline;
Happier, that while all younger hearts shall bleed,
Mine shall escape the doom thine eyes assign
To those whose admiration shall succeed,
But mix'd with pangs to Love's even loveliest hours decreed.

Oh! let that eye, which, wild as the gazelle's,
Now brightly bold or beautifully shy,
Wins as it wanders, dazzles where it dwells,
Glance o'er this page, nor to my verse deny
That smile for which my breast might vainly sigh,
Could I to thee be ever more than friend:
This much, dear maid, accord; nor question why
To one so young my strain I would commend,
But bid me with my wreath one matchless lily blend.

Such is thy name with this my verse entwined;
And long as kinder eyes a look shall cast
On Harold's page, Ianthe's here enshrined
Shall thus be first beheld, forgotten last:
My days once number'd, should this homage past
Attract thy fairy fingers near the lyre
Of him who hail'd thee, loveliest as thou wast,
Such is the most my memory may desire;
Though more than Hope can claim, could Friendship less require?

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE.

CANTO THE FIRST.

I.

Oh, thou! in Hellas deem'd of heavenly birth,
Muse! form'd or fabled at the minstrel's will!
Since shamed full oft by later lyres on earth,
Mine dares not call thee from thy sacred hill:
Yet there I've wander'd by thy vaunted rill;
Yes! sigh'd o'er Delphi's long-deserted shrine,*
Where, save that feeble fountain, all is still;
Nor mote my shell awake the weary Nine
To grace so plain a tale—this lowly lay of mine.

II.

Whilom in Albion's isle there dwelt a youth,
Who ne in virtue's ways did take delight;
But spent his days in riot most uncouth,
And vex'd with mirth the drowsy ear of Night.
Ah, me! in sooth he was a shameless wight,
Sore given to revel and ungodly glee;
Few earthly things found favor in his sight
Save concubines and carnal companie,
And flaunting wassailers of high and low degree.

III.

Childe Harold was he hight:—but whence his name
And lineage long, it suits me not to say;
Suffice it, that perchance they were of fame,
And had been glorious in another day:
But one sad losel soils a name for aye,
However mighty in the olden time;
Nor all that heralds rake from coffin'd clay,
Nor florid prose, nor honey'd lies of rhyme,
Can blazon evil deeds, or consecrate a crime.

* The little village of Castri stands partly on the site of Delphi. Along the path of the mountain, from Chrysso, are the remains of sepulchres hewn in and from the rock. "One," said the guide, "of a king who broke his neck hunting." His majesty had certainly chosen the fittest spot for such an achievement. A little above Castri is a cave, supposed the Pythian, of immense depth; the upper part of it is paved, and now a cow-house. On the other side of Castri stands a Greek monastery; some way above which is the cleft in the rock, with a range of caverns difficult of ascent, and apparently leading to the interior of the mountain; probably to the Corycian Cavern mentioned by Pausanias. From this part descend the fountain and the "Dews of Castalie."

IV.

Childe Harold bask'd him in the noontide sun,
Disporting there like any other fly,
Nor deem'd before his little day was done
One blast might chill him into misery.
But long ere scarce a third of his pass'd by,
Worse than adversity the Childe befell;
He felt the fulness of satiety:
Then loathed he in his native land to dwell,
Which seem'd to him more lone than Eremite's sad cell.

V.

For he through Sin's long labyrinth had run,
Nor made atonement when he did amiss.
Had sigh'd to many though he loved but one,
And that loved one, alas! could ne'er be his.
Ah, happy she! to 'scape from him whose kiss
Had been pollution unto aught so chaste;
Who soon had left her charms for vulgar bliss,
And spoil'd her goodly lands to gild his waste.
Nor calm domestic peace had ever deign'd to taste.

VI.

And now Childe Harold was sore sick at heart,
And from his fellow bacchanals would flee;
'Tis said, at times the sullen tear would start,
But Pride congeal'd the drop within his e'e:
Apart he stalk'd in joyless reverie,
And from his native land resolved to go,
And visit scorching climes beyond the sea;
With pleasure drugg'd, he almost long'd for woe,
And e'en for change of scene would seek the shades below.

VII.

The Childe departed from his father's hall;
It was a vast and venerable pile;
So old, it seemed only not to fall,
Yet strength was pillar'd in each massy aisle.
Monastic dome! condemn'd to uses vile!
Where Superstition once had made her den,
Now Paphian girls were known to sing and smile;
And monks might deem their time was come agen,
If ancient tales say true, nor wrong these holy men.

VIII.

Yet oft-times in his maddest mirthful mood
Strange pangs would flash along Childe Harold's brow,
As if the memory of some deadly feud
Or disappointed passion lurk'd below:
But this none knew, nor haply cared to know:
For his was not that open, artless soul
That feels relief by bidding sorrow flow,
Nor sought he friend to counsel or condole,
Whate'er this grief mote be, which he could not control.

IX.

And none did love him—though to hall and bower
He gather'd revellers from far and near,
He knew them flatterers of the festal hour;
The heartless parasites of present cheer.
Yea! none did love him—not his lemans dear—
But pomp and power alone are woman's care,
And where these are light Eros finds a fere;
Maidens, like moths, are ever caught by glare,
And Mammon wins his way where Seraphs might despair.

X.

Childe Harold had a mother—not forgot,
Though parting from that mother he did shun;
A sister whom he loved, but saw her not
Before his weary pilgrimage begun:
If friends he had, he bade adieu to none.
Yet deem not thence his breast a breast of steel:
Ye, who have known what 'tis to dote upon
A few dear objects, will in sadness feel
Such partings break the heart they fondly hope to heal.

XI.

His house, his home, his heritage, his lands,
The laughing dames in whom he did delight,
Whose large blue eyes, fair locks, and snowy hands,
Might shake the saintship of an anchorite,
And long had fed his youthful appetite;
His goblets brimm'd with every costly wine,
And all that mote to luxury invite,
Without a sigh he left to cross the brine,
And traverse Paynim shores, and pass Earth's central line

XII.

The sails were fill'd, and fair the light winds blew,
As glad to waft him from his native home;
And fast the white rocks faded from his view,
And soon were lost in circumambient foam:
And then, it may be, of his wish to roam
Repented he, but in his bosom slept
The silent thought, nor from his lips did come
One word of wail, whilst others sate and wept,
And to the reckless gales unmanly moaning kept.

XIII.

But when the sun was sinking in the sea,
He seized his harp, which he at times could string,
And strike, albeit with untaught melody,
When deem'd he no strange ear was listening:
And now his fingers o'er it he did fling,
And tuned his farewell in the dim twilight,
While flew the vessel on her snowy wing,
And fleeting shores receded from his sight,
Thus to the elements he pour'd his last "Good Night."

"Adieu, adieu! my native shore
Fades o'er the waters blue;
The Night-winds sigh, the breakers roar,
And shrieks the wild sea-mew.
Yon Sun that sets upon the sea
We follow in his flight:
Farewell a while to him and thee,
My native Land—Good Night!

"A few short hours, and he will rise
To give the morrow birth;
And I shall hail the main and skies,
But not my mother earth.
Deserted is my own good hall,
Its hearth is desolate;
Wild weeds are gathering on the wall;
My dog howls at the gate.

"Come hither, hither, my little page,
Why dost thou weep and wail?
Or dost thou dread the billow's rage,
Or tremble at the gale?
But dash the tear-drop from thine eye;
Our ship is swift and strong:
Our fleetest falcon scarce can fly
More merrily along."

"Let winds be shrill, let waves roll high,
I fear not wave nor wind:
Yet marvel not, Sir Childe, that I
Am sorrowful in mind;
For I have from my father gone,
A mother whom I love,
And have no friend, save these alone,
But thee—and One above.

"My father bless'd me fervently,
Yet did not much complain;
But sorely will my mother sigh
Till I come back again."—
"Enough, enough, my little lad!
Such tears become thine eye;
If I thy guileless bosom had,
Mine own would not be dry.

"Come hither, hither, my stanch yeoman,
Why dost thou look so pale?
Or dost thou dread a French foeman?
Or shiver at the gale?"—
"Deem'st thou I tremble for my life?
Sir Childe, I'm not so weak;
But thinking on an absent wife
Will blanch a faithful cheek.

"My spouse and boys dwell near thy hall,
Along the bordering lake,
And when they on their father call,
What answer shall she make?"—

"Enough, enough, my yeoman good,
Thy grief let none gainsay;
But I, who am of lighter mood,
Will laugh to flee away.

"For who would trust the seeming sighs
Of wife or paramour?
Fresh feres will dry the bright blue eyes
We late saw streaming o'er.
For pleasures past I do not grieve,
Nor perils gathering near;
My greatest grief is that I leave
No thing that claims a tear.

"And now I'm in the world alone,
Upon the wide, wide sea:
But why should I for others groan,
When none will sigh for me?
Perchance my dog will whine in vain,
Till fed by stranger hands;
But long ere I come back again
He'd tear me where he stands.

"With thee, my bark, I'll swiftly go
Athwart the foaming brine;
Nor care what land thou bear'st me to,
So not again to mine.
Welcome, welcome, ye dark blue waves!
And when you fail my sight,
Welcome, ye deserts, and ye caves!
My native land—Good Night!"

XIV.

On, on the vessel flies, the land is gone,
And winds are rude, in Biscay's sleepless bay.
Four days are sped, but with the fifth, anon,
New shores descried make every bosom gay;
And Cintra's mountain greets them on their way,
And Tagus dashing onward to the deep,
His fabled golden tribute bent to pay;
And soon on board the Lusian pilots leap,
And steer 'twixt fertile shores where yet few rustics reap.

XV.

Oh, Christ! it is a goodly sight to see
What Heaven hath done for this delicious land!
What fruits of fragrance blush on every tree!
What goodly prospects o'er the hills expand!
But man would mar them with an impious hand:
And when the Almighty lifts His fiercest scourge
'Gainst those who most transgress His high command,
With treble vengeance will His hot shafts urge
Gaul's locust host, and earth from fellest foemen purge.

XVI.

What beauties doth Lisboa first unfold!
Her image floating on that noble tide.

Which poets vainly pave with sands of gold,
But now whereon a thousand keels did ride
Of mighty strength, since Albion was allied,
And to the Lusians did her aid afford:
A nation swollen with ignorance and pride
Who lick yet loathe the hand that waves the sword
To save them from the wrath of Gaul's unsparing lord.

XVII.

But whoso entereth within this town,
That, sheening far, celestial seems to be,
Disconsolate will wander up and down,
'Mid many things unsightly to strange e'e;
For hut and palace show like filthily:
The dingy denizens are rear'd in dirt;
No personage of high or mean degree
Doth care for cleanness of surtout or shirt,
Though shent with Egypt's plague, unkempt, unwash'd; unhurt.

XVIII.

Poor, paltry slaves! yet born 'midst noblest scenes—
Why, Nature, waste thy wonders on such men?
Lo! Cintra's glorious Eden intervenes
In variegated maze of mount and glen.
Ah, me! what hand can pencil guide, or pen,
To follow half on which the eye dilates
Through views more dazzling unto mortal ken
Than those whereof such things the bard relates,
Who to the awe-struck world unlock'd Elysium's gates?

XIX.

The horrid crags, by toppling convent crown'd,
The cork-trees hoar that clothe the shaggy steep,
The mountain-moss by scorching skies imbrown'd,
The sunken glen, whose sunless shrubs must weep,
The tender azure of the unruffled deep,
The orange tints that gild the greenest bough,
The torrents that from cliff to valley leap,
The vine on high, the willow-branch below,
Mix'd in one mighty scene, with varied beauty glow.

XX.

Then slowly climb the many-winding way,
And frequent turn to linger as you go,
From loftier rocks new loveliness survey,
And rest ye at "Our Lady's House of Woe;"*
Where frugal monks their little relics show,
And sundry legends to the stranger tell:
Here impious men have punish'd been, and lo!
Deep in yon cave Honorius long did dwell,
In hope to merit Heaven by making earth a Hell.

* The convent of "Our Lady of Punishment," *Nossa Senora de Pena*, on the summit of the rock. Below, at some distance, is the Cork Convent, where St. Honorius dug his den, over which is his epitaph. From the hills, the sea adds to the beauty of the view.

XXI.

And here and there, as up the crags you spring,
Mark many rude-carved crosses near the path:
Yet deem not these devotion's offering—
These are memorials frail of murderous wrath:
For wheresoe'er the shrieking victim hath
Pour'd forth his blood beneath the assassin's knife,
Some hand erects a cross of mouldering lath;
And grove and glen with thousand such are rife
Throughout this purple land, where law secures not life! *

XXII.

On sloping mounds, or in the vale beneath,
Are domes where whilom kings did make repair:
But now the wild flowers round them only breathe;
Yet ruin'd splendor still is lingering there,
And yonder towers the Prince's palace fair;
There thou, too, Vathek! England's wealthiest son,
Once form'd thy Paradise, as not aware
When wanton Wealth her mightiest deeds hath done,
Meek Peace voluptuous lures was ever wont to shun.

XXIII.

Here didst thou dwell, here schemes of pleasure plan,
Beneath yon mountain's ever beauteous brow;
But now, as if a thing unblest by Man,
Thy fairy dwelling is as lone as thou!
Here giant weeds a passage scarce allow
To halls deserted, portals gaping wide;
Fresh lessons to the thinking bosom, how
Vain are the pleasaunces on earth supplied;
Swept into wrecks anon by Time's ungentle tide.

XXIV.

Behold the hall where chiefs were late convened! †
Oh! dome displeasing unto British eye!
With diadem hight foolscap, lo! a fiend,
A little fiend that scoffs incessantly,
There sits in parchment robe array'd, and by
His side is hung a seal and sable scroll,
Where blazon'd glare names known to chivalry,
And sundry signatures adorn the roll,
Whereat the Urchin points, and laughs with all his soul.

* It is a well-known fact that in the year 1809, the assassinations in the streets of Lisbon and its vicinity were not confined by the Portuguese to their countrymen, but that Englishmen were daily butchered; and so far from redress being obtained, we were requested not to interfere if we perceived any compatriot defending himself against his allies. I was once stopped in the way to the theatre at eight o'clock in the evening, when the streets were not more empty than they generally are at that hour, opposite to an open shop, and in a carriage with a friend: had we not fortunately been armed, I have not the least doubt that we should have "adorned a tale" instead of telling one. The crime of assassination is not confined to Portugal: in Sicily and Malta we are knocked on the head at a handsome average nightly, and not a Sicilian or Maltese is ever punished!

† The Convention of Cintra was signed in the palace of the Marchese Marialva.

XXV.

Convention is the dwarfish demon styled
That foil'd the knights in Marialva's dome:
Of brains (if brains they had) he them beguiled,
And turn'd a nation's shallow joy to gloom.
Here Folly dash'd to earth the victor's plume,
And Policy regain'd what Arms had lost:
For chiefs like ours in vain may laurels bloom!
Woe to the conquering, not the conquer'd host,
Since baffled Triumph droops on Lusitania's coast.

XXVI.

And ever since that martial synod met,
Britannia sickens, Cintra! at thy name;
And folks in office at the mention fret,
And fain would blush, if blush they could, for shame.
How will posterity the deed proclaim!
Will not our own and fellow-nations sneer,
To view these champions cheated of their fame,
By foes in fight o'erthrown, yet victors here,
Where Scorn her finger points through many a coming year?

XXVII.

So deem'd the Childe, as o'er the mountains he
Did take his way in solitary guise:
Sweet was the scene, yet soon he thought to flee,
More restless than the swallow in the skies:
Though here awhile he learn'd to moralize,
For Meditation fix'd at times on him,
And conscious Reason whisper'd to despise
His early youth misspent in maddest whim;
But as he gazed on truth his aching eyes grew dim.

XXVIII.

To horse! to horse! he quits, for ever quits
A scene of peace, though soothing to his soul:
Again he rouses from his moping fits,
But seeks not now the harlot and the bowl.
Onward he flies, nor fix'd as yet the goal
Where he shall rest him on his pilgrimage;
And o'er him many changing scenes must roll
Ere toil his thirst for travel can assuage,
Or he shall calm his breast, or learn experience sage.

XXIX.

Yet Mafra shall one moment claim delay,
Where dwelt of yore the Lusians' luckless queen;*
And church and court did mingle their array,
And mass and revel were alternate seen,
Lordlings and freres—ill-sorted fry, I ween!
But here the Babylonian whore hath built
A dome, where flaunts she in such glorious sheen,
That men forget the blood which she hath spilt,
And bow the knee to Pomp that loves to varnish guilt.

* Her luckless Majesty went subsequently mad: and Dr. Willis, who so dexterously cudgelled kingly pericraniums, could make nothing of hers.

XXX.

O'er vales that teem with fruits, romantic hills,
(Oh that such hills upheld a free-born race!)
Whereon to gaze the eye with joyaunce fills,
Childe Harold wends through many a pleasant place.
Though sluggards deem it but a foolish chase,
And marvel men should quit their easy-chair,
The toilsome way, and long, long league to trace,
Oh! there is sweetness in the mountain air,
And life, that bloated Ease can never hope to share.

XXXI.

More bleak to view the hills at length recede,
And, less luxuriant, smoother vales extend;
Immense horizon-bounded plains succeed!
Far as the eye discerns, withouten end,
Spain's realms appear whereon her shepherds tend
Flocks, whose rich fleece right well the trader knows—
Now must the pastor's arm his lambs defend:
For Spain is compass'd by unyielding foes,
And all must shield their all, or share Subjection's woes.

XXXII.

Where Lusitania and her Sister meet,
Deem ye what bounds the rival realms divide?
Or ere the jealous queens of nations greet,
Doth Tayo interpose his mighty tide?
Or dark sierras rise in craggy pride?
Or fence of art, like China's vasty wall?
Ne barrier wall, ne river deep and wide,
Ne horrid crags, nor mountains dark and tall,
Rise like the rocks that part Hispania's land from Gaul:

XXXIII.

But these between a silver streamlet glides,
And scarce a name distinguisheth the brook,
Though rival kingdoms press its verdant sides.
Here leans the idle shepherd on his crook,
And vacant on the rippling waves doth look,
That peaceful still 'twixt bitterest foemen flow;
For proud each peasant as the noblest duke:
Well doth the Spanish hind the difference know
Twixt him and Lusian slave, the lowest of the low.*

XXXIV.

But ere the mingling bounds have far been pass'd,
Dark Guadiana rolls his power along
In sullen billows, murmuring and vast,
So noted ancient roundelays among.
Whilom upon his banks did legions throng
Of Moor and Knight, in mailed splendor drest:

* As I found the Portuguese, so I have characterized them. That they are since improved, at least in courage, is evident. The late exploits of Lord Wellington have effaced the follies of Cintra. He has, indeed, done wonders: he has, perhaps, changed the character of a nation, reconciled rival superstitions, and baffled an enemy who never retreated before his predecessors.—1812.

Here ceased the swift their race, here sunk the strong;
The Paynim turban and the Christian crest
Mix'd on the bleeding stream, by floating hosts oppress'd.

XXXV.

Oh, lovely Spain! renown'd, romantic land!
Where is that standard which Pelagio bore,
When Cava's traitor-sire first call'd the band
That dyed thy mountain-streams with Gothic gore?*
Where are those bloody banners which of yore
Waved o'er thy sons, victorious to the gale,
And drove at last the spoilers to their shore?
Red gleam'd the cross, and waned the crescent pale,
While Afric's echoes thrill'd with Moorish matrons' wail.

XXXVI.

Teems not each ditty with the glorious tale?
Ah! such, alas! the hero's amplest fate!
When granite moulders and when records fail,
A peasant's plaint prolongs his dubious date.
Pride! bend thine eye from heaven to thine estate,
See how the mighty shrink into a song!
Can Volume, Pillar, Pile, preserve thee great?
Or must thou trust Tradition's simple tongue,
When Flattery sleeps with thee, and History does thee wrong?

XXXVII.

Awake, ye sons of Spain! awake! advance
Lo! Chivalry, your ancient goddess, cries;
But wields not, as of old, her thirsty lance,
Nor shakes her crimson plumage in the skies:
Now on the smoke of blazing bolts she flies,
And speaks in thunder through yon engine's roar!
In every peal she calls—"Awake! arise!"
Say, is her voice more feeble than of yore,
When her war-song was heard on Andalusia's shore?

XXXVIII.

Hark! heard you not those hoofs of dreadful note?
Sounds not the clang of conflict on the heath?
Saw ye not whom the reeking sabre smote;
Nor saved your brethren ere they sank beneath
Tyrants and tyrants' slaves?—the fires of death,
The bale-fires flash on high:—from rock to rock
Each volley tells that thousands cease to breathe;
Death rides upon the sulphury Siroc,
Red Battle stamps his foot, and nations feel the shock.

XXXIX.

Lo! where the Giant on the mountain stands,
His blood-red tresses deepening in the sun,
With death-shot glowing in his fiery hands,
And eye that scorcheth all it glares upon;

* Count Julian's daughter, the Helen of Spain. Pelagius preserved his independence in the fastnesses of the Asturias, and the descendants of his followers, after some centuries, completed their struggle by the conquest of Grenada.

Restless it rolls, now fix'd, and now anon
Flashing afar,—and at his iron feet
Destruction cowers, to mark what deeds are done;
For on this morn three potent nations meet,
To shed before his shrine the blood he deems most sweet.

XL.

By Heaven! it is a splendid sight to see
(For one who hath no friend, no brother there)
Their rival scarfs of mix'd embroidery,
Their various arms that glitter in the air!
What gallant war-hounds rouse them from their lair,
And gnash their fangs, loud yelling for the prey!
All join the chase, but few the triumph share;
The Grave shall bear the chiefest prize away,
And Havoc scarce for joy can number their array.

XLI.

Three hosts combine to offer sacrifice;
Three tongues prefer strange orisons on high;
Three gaudy standards flout the pale blue skies;
The shouts are France, Spain, Albion, Victory!
The foe, the victim, and the fond ally
That fights for all, but ever fights in vain,
Are met—as if at home they could not die—
To feed the crow on Talavera's plain,
And fertilize the field that each pretends to gain.

XLII.

There shall they rot—Ambition's honor'd fools!
Yes, Honor decks the turf that wraps their clay.
Vain Sophistry! in these behold the tools,
The broken tools, that tyrants cast away
By myriads, when they dare to pave their way
With human hearts—to what?—a dream alone.
Can despots compass aught that hails their sway?
Or call with truth one span of earth their own,
Save that wherein at last they crumble bone by bone?

XLIII.

O Albuera, glorious field of grief!
As o'er thy plain the Pilgrim prick'd his steed,
Who could foresee thee, in a space so brief,
A scene where mingling foes should boast and bleed!
Peace to the perish'd! may the warrior's meed
And tears of triumph their reward prolong!
Till others fall where other chieftains lead,
Thy name shall circle round the gaping throng,
And shine in worthless lays, the theme of transient song.

XLIV.

Enough of Battle's minions! let them play
Their game of lives, and barter breath for fame:
Fame that will scarce reanimate their clay,
Though thousands fall to deck some single name.

In sooth 'twere sad to thwart their noble aim
Who strike, blest hirelings! for their country's good,
And die, that living might have proved her shame;
Perish'd, perchance, in some domestic feud,
Or in a narrower sphere wild Rapine's path pursued.

XLV.

Full swiftly Harold wends his lonely way
Where proud Sevilla triumphs unsubdued:
Yet is she free—the spoiler's wish'd-for prey!
Soon, soon shall Conquest's fiery foot intrude,
Blackening her lovely domes, with traces rude.
Inevitable hour! 'Gainst fate to strive
Where Desolation plants her famish'd brood
Is vain, or Ilion, Tyre, might yet survive,
And Virtue vanquish all, and Murder cease to thrive.

XLVI.

But all unconscious of the coming doom,
The feast, the song, the revel here abounds;
Strange modes of merriment the hours consume,
Nor bleed these patriots with their country's wounds:
Nor here War's clarion, but Love's rebeck sounds;
Here Folly still his votaries enthralls;
And young-eyed Lewdness walks her midnight rounds:
Girt with the silent crimes of capitals,
Still to the last kind Vice clings to the tottering walls.

XLVII.

Not so the rustic—with his trembling mate
He lurks, nor casts his heavy eye afar,
Lest he should view his vineyard desolate,
Blasted below the dun hot breath of war.
No more beneath soft Eve's consenting star
Fandango twirls his jocund castanet:
Ah, monarchs! could ye taste the mirth ye mar,
Not in the toils of Glory would ye fret;
The hoarse dull drum would sleep, and Man be happy yet.

XLVIII.

How carols now the lusty muleteer?
Of love, romance, devotion is his lay,
As whilom he was wont the leagues to cheer,
His quick bells wildly jingling on the way?
No! as he speeds, he chants "Viva el Rey!"*
And checks his song to execrate Godoy,
The royal wittol Charles, and curse the day
When first Spain's queen beheld the black-eyed boy,
And gore-faced Treason sprung from her adulterate joy.

* "Viva el Rey Fernando!" Long live King Ferdinand! is the chorus of most of the Spanish patriotic songs. They are chiefly in dispraise of the old King Charles, the Queen, and the Prince of Peace. I have heard many of them: some of the airs are beautiful.—Don Manuel Godoy, the *Principe de la Paz*, of an ancient but decayed family, was born at Badajoz, on the frontiers of Portugal, and was originally in the ranks of the Spanish guards; till his person attracted the queen's eyes, and raised him to the dukedom of Alcudia, &c., &c. It is to this man that the Spaniards universally impute the ruin of their country.

XLIX.

On yon long, level plain, at distance crown'd
With crags, whereon those Moorish turrets rest,
Wide scatter'd hoof-marks dint the wounded ground;
And, scathed by fire, the greensward's darken'd vest
Tells that the foe was Andalusia's guest:
Here was the camp, the watch-flame, and the host,
Here the bold peasant storm'd the dragon's nest;
Still does he mark it with triumphant boast,
And points to yonder cliffs, which oft were won and lost.

L.

And whomsoe'er along the path you meet
Bears in his cap the badge of crimson hue,*
Which tells you whom to shun and whom to greet:
Woe to the man that walks in public view
Without of loyalty this token true:
Sharp is the knife, and sudden is the stroke;
And sorely would the Gallic foeman rue,
If subtle poniards, wrapt beneath the cloak,
Could blunt the sabre's edge, or clear the cannon's smoke.

LI.

At every turn Morena's dusky height
Sustains aloft the battery's iron load;
And, far as mortal eye can compass sight,
The mountain-howitzer, the broken road,
The bristling palisade, the fosse o'erflow'd,
The station'd bands, the never-vacant watch,
The magazine in rocky durance stow'd,
The holster'd steed beneath the shed of thatch,
The ball-piled pyramid, the ever-blazing match,†

LII.

Portend the deeds to come:—but he whose nod
Has tumbled feebler despots from their sway,
A moment pauseth ere he lifts the rod;
A little moment deigneth to delay:
Soon will his legions sweep through these their way;
The West must own the Scourger of the world.
Ah, Spain! how sad will be thy reckoning-day,
When soars Gaul's Vulture, with his wings unfurl'd,
And thou shalt view thy sons in crowds to Hades hurl'd.

LIII.

And must they fall? the young, the proud, the brave,
To swell one bloated chief's unwholesome reign?
No step between submission and a grave?
The rise of rapine and the fall of Spain?
And doth the Power that man adores ordain
Their doom, nor heed the suppliant's appeal?
Is all that desperate Valor acts in vain?
And Counsel sage, and patriotic Zeal,
The Veteran's skill, Youth's fire, and Manhood's heart of steel?

* The red cockade, with "Fernando VII." in the centre.

† All who have seen a battery will recollect the pyramidal form in which shot and shells are piled. The Sierra Morena was fortified in every defile through which I passed on my way to Seville.

LIV.

Is it for this the Spanish maid, aroused,
Hangs on the willow her unstrung guitar,
And, all unsex'd, the anlace hath espoused,
Sung the loud song, and dared the deed of war?
And she, whom once the semblance of a scar
Appall'd, an owlet's larum chill'd with dread,
Now views the column-scattering bayonet jar,
The falchion flash, and o'er the yet warm dead
Stalks with Minerva's step where Mars might quake to tread.

LV.

Ye who shall marvel when you hear her tale,
Oh! had you known her in her softer hour,
Mark'd her black eye that mocks her coal-black veil,
Heard her light, lively tones in lady's bower,
Seen her long locks that foil the painter's power,
Her fairy form, with more than female grace,
Scarce would you deem that Saragossa's tower
Beheld her smile in Danger's Gorgon face,
Thin the closed ranks, and lead in Glory's fearful chase.

LVI.

Her lover sinks—she sheds no ill-timed tear;
Her chief is slain—she fills his fatal post;
Her fellows flee—she checks their base career;
The foe retires—she heads the sallying host:
Who can appease like her a lover's ghost?
Who can avenge so well a leader's fall?
What maid retrieve when man's flush'd hope is lost?
Who hang so fiercely on the flying Gaul?
Foil'd by a woman's hand, before a batter'd wall?*

LVII.

Yet are Spain's maids no race of Amazons,
But form'd for all the witching arts of love:
Though thus in arms they emulate her sons,
And in the horrid phalanx dare to move,
'Tis but the tender fierceness of the dove,
Pecking the hand that hovers o'er her mate:
In softness as in firmness far above
Remoter females, famed for sickening prate;
Her mind is nobler sure, her charms perchance as great.

LVIII.

The seal Love's dimpling finger hath impress'd
Denotes how soft that chin which bears his touch:†
Her lips, whose kisses pout to leave their nest,
Bid man be valiant ere he merit such:

* Such were the exploits of the Maid of Saragossa, who by her valor elevated herself to the highest rank of heroines. When the author was at Seville, she walked daily on the Prado, decorated with medals and orders, by command of the Junta.

† "Sigilla in mento impressa Amoris digitulo
Vestigio demonstrant mollitudinem."—AUL. GEL.

Her glance, how wildly beautiful! how much
Hath Phœbus woo'd in vain to spoil her cheek,
Which glows yet smoother from his amorous clutch!
Who round the North for paler dames would seek?
How poor their forms appear! how languid, wan, and weak!

LIX.

Match me, ye climes! which poets love to laud;
Match me, ye harems of the land! where now
I strike my strain, far distant, to applaud
Beauties that even a cynic must avow!
Match me those houris, whom ye scarce allow
To taste the gale lest Love should ride the wind,
With Spain's dark-glancing daughters—deign to know,
There your wise Prophet's paradise we find,
His black-eyed maids of Heaven, angelically kind.

LX.

Oh thou, Parnassus! whom I now survey,
Not in the frenzy of a dreamer's eye,
Not in the fabled landscape of a lay,
But soaring snow-clad through thy native sky,
In the wild pomp of mountain majesty!
What marvel if I thus essay to sing?
The humblest of thy pilgrims passing by
Would gladly woo thine Echoes with his string,
Though from thy heights no more one Muse will wave her wing.

LXI.

Oft have I dream'd of thee! whose glorious name
Who knows not, knows not man's divinest lore:
And now I view thee, 'tis, alas! with shame
That I in feeblest accents must adore.
When I recount thy worshippers of yore,
I tremble, and can only bend the knee;
Nor raise my voice, nor vainly dare to soar,
But gaze beneath thy cloudy canopy
In silent joy to think at last I look on thee!

LXII.

Happier in this than mightiest bards have been,
Whose fate to distant homes confined their lot,
Shall I unmoved behold the hallow'd scene,
Which others rave of, though they know it not?
Though here no more Apollo haunts his grot,
And thou, the Muses' seat, art now their grave,
Some gentle spirit still pervades the spot,
Sighs in the gale, keeps silence in the cave,
And glides with glassy foot o'er yon melodious wave.

LXIII.

Of thee hereafter.—Even amidst my strain
I turn'd aside to pay my homage here;
Forgot the land, the sons, the maids of Spain;
Her fate, to every free-born bosom dear;

And hail'd thee, not perchance without a tear.
Now to my theme—but from thy holy haunt
Let me some remnant, some memorial bear;
Yield me one leaf of Daphne's deathless plant,
Nor let thy votary's hope be deem'd an idle vaunt.

LXIV.

But ne'er didst thou, fair Mount! when Greece was young,
See round thy giant base a brighter choir,
Nor e'er did Delphi, when her priestess sung
The Pythian hymn with more than mortal fire,
Behold a train more fitting to inspire
The song of love than Andalusia's maids,
Nurst in the glowing lap of soft desire:
Ah! that to these were given such peaceful shades
As Greece can still bestow, though Glory fly her glades.

LXV.

Fair is proud Seville; let her country boast
Her strength, her wealth, her site of ancient days;
But Cadiz, rising on the distant coast,
Calls forth a sweeter, though ignoble praise.
Ah, Vice! how soft are thy voluptuous ways!
While boyish blood is mantling, who can 'scape
The fascination of thy magic gaze?
A Cherub-hydra round us dost thou gape,
And mould to every taste thy dear delusive shape.

LXVI.

When Paphos fell by Time—accursed Time!
The Queen who conquers all must yield to thee—
The Pleasures fled, but sought as warm a clime;
And Venus, constant to her native sea,
To nought else constant, hither deign'd to flee,
And fix'd her shrine within these walls of white;
Though not to one dome circumscribeth she
Her worship, but, devoted to her rite,
A thousand altars rise, for ever blazing bright.

LXVII.

From morn till night, from night till startled Morn,
Peeps blushing on the revel's laughing crew,
The song is heard, the rosy garland worn;
Devices quaint, and frolics ever new,
Tread on each other's kibes. A long adieu
He bids to sober joy that here sojourns:
Nought interrupts the riot, though in lieu
Of true devotion monkish incense burns,
And love and prayer unite, or rule the hour by turns.

LXVIII.

The Sabbath comes, a day of blessed rest;
What hallows it upon this Christian shore?
Lo! it is sacred to a solemn feast:
Hark! heard you not the forest monarch's roar?

Crashing the lance, he snuffs the spouting gore
Of man and steed, o'erthrown beneath his horn;
The throng'd arena shakes with shouts for more;
Yells the mad crowd o'er entrails freshly torn,
Nor shrinks the female eye, nor even affects to mourn.

LXIX.

The seventh day this; the jubilee of man.
London! right well thou know'st the day of prayer:
Then thy spruce citizen, wash'd artisan,
And smug apprentice gulp their weekly air:
Thy coach of hackney, whiskey, one-horse chair,
And humblest gig through sundry suburbs whirl;
To Hampstead, Brentford, Harrow, make repair;
Till the tired jade the wheel forgets to hurl,
Provoking envious gibe from each pedestrian churl.

LXX.

Some o'er thy Thamis row the ribbon'd fair,
Others along the safer turnpike fly;
Some Richmond-hill ascend, some scud to Ware,
And many to the steep of Highgate hie.
Ask ye, Bœotian shades! the reason why?
'Tis to the worship of the solemn Horn,
Grasp'd in the holy hand of Mystery,
In whose dread name both men and maids are sworn,
And consecrate the oath with draught, and dance till morn.

LXXI.

All have their fooleries—not alike are thine,
Fair Cadiz, rising o'er the dark blue sea!
Soon as the matin bell proclaimeth nine,
Thy saint adorers count the rosary:
Much is the VIRGIN teased to shrive them free
(Well do I ween the only virgin there)
From crimes as numerous as her beadsmen be;
Then to the crowded circus forth they fare:
Young, old, high, low, at once the same diversion share.

LXXII.

The lists are oped, the spacious area clear'd,
Thousands on thousands piled are seated round;
Long ere the first loud trumpet's note is heard,
No vacant space for lated wight is found:
Here dons, grandees, but chiefly dames abound,
Skill'd in the ogle of a roguish eye,
Yet ever well inclined to heal the wound;
None through their cold disdain are doom'd to die,
As moon-struck bards complain, by Love's sad archery.

LXXIII.

Hush'd is the din of tongues—on gallant steeds,
With milk-white crest, gold spur, and light poised lance,
Four cavaliers prepare for venturous deeds,
And lowly bending to the lists advance;

Rich are their scarfs, their chargers featly prance:
If in the dangerous game they shine to-day,
The crowd's loud shout and ladies' lovely glance,
Best prize of better acts, they bear away,
And all that kings or chiefs e'er gain their toils repay.

LXXIV.

In costly sheen and gaudy cloak array'd,
But all afoot, the light-limb'd Matadore
Stands in the centre, eager to invade
The lord of lowing herds; but not before
The ground, with cautious tread, is traversed o'er,
Lest aught unseen should lurk to thwart his speed:
His arms a dart, he fights aloof, nor more
Can man achieve without the friendly steed—
Alas! too oft condemn'd for him to bear and bleed.

LXXV.

Thrice sounds the clarion; lo! the signal falls,
The den expands, and Expectation mute
Gapes round the silent circle's peopled walls.
Bounds with one lashing spring the mighty brute,
And wildly staring, spurns, with sounding foot,
The sand, nor blindly rushes on his foe:
Here, there, he points his threatening front, to suit
His first attack, wide waving to and fro
His angry tail; red rolls his eye's dilated glow.

LXXVI.

Sudden he stops; his eye is fix'd: away,
Away, thou heedless boy! prepare the spear;
Now is thy time, to perish, or display
The skill that yet may check his mad career.
With well-timed croupe the nimble coursers veer;
On foams the bull, but not unscathed he goes;
Streams from his flank the crimson torrent clear:
He flies, he wheels, distracted with his throes:
Dart follows dart; lance, lance; loud bellowings speak his woes.

LXXVII.

Again he comes; nor dart nor lance avail,
Nor the wild plunging of the tortured horse;
Though man and man's avenging arms assail,
Vain are his weapons, vainer is his force:
One gallant steed is stretch'd a mangled corse;
Another, hideous sight! unseam'd appears,
His gory chest unveils life's panting source;
Though death-struck, still his feeble frame he rears;
Staggering, but stemming all, his lord unharm'd he bears.

LXXVIII.

Foil'd, bleeding, breathless, furious to the last,
Full in the centre stands the bull at bay,
'Mid wounds, and clinging darts, and lances brast,
And foes disabled in the brutal fray:

And now the Matadores around him play,
Shake the red cloak, and poise the ready brand:
Once more through all he bursts his thundering way—
Vain rage! the mantle quits the conynge hand,
Wraps his fierce eye—'tis past—he sinks upon the sand!

LXXIX.

Where his vast neck just mingles with the spine,
Sheathed in his form the deadly weapon lies.
He stops—he starts—disdaining to decline:
Slowly he falls amidst triumphant cries,
Without a groan, without a struggle, dies.
The decorated car appears—on high
The corse is piled—sweet sight for vulgar eyes—
Four steeds that spurn the rein, as swift as shy,
Hurl the dark bulk along, scarce seen in dashing by.

LXXX.

Such the ungentle sport that oft invites
The Spanish maid, and cheers the Spanish swain:
Nurtured in blood betimes, his heart delights
In vengeance, gloating on another's pain.
What private feuds the troubled village stain!
Though now one phalanx'd host should meet the foe;
Enough, alas! in humble homes remain,
To meditate 'gainst friends the secret blow,
For some slight cause of wrath, whence life's warm stream must flow.

LXXXI.

But Jealousy has fled: his bars, his bolts,
His wither'd sentinel, Duenna sage!
And all whereat the generous soul revolts,
Which the stern dotard deem'd he could encage,
Have pass'd to darkness with the vanish'd age.
Who late so free as Spanish girls were seen,
(Ere War uprose in his volcanic rage,)
With braided tresses bounding o'er the green,
While on the gay dance shone Night's lover-loving Queen?

LXXXII.

Oh! many a time and oft had Harold loved,
Or dream'd he loved, since rapture is a dream;
But now his wayward bosom was unmoved,
For not yet had he drunk of Lethe's stream:
And lately had he learn'd with truth to deem
Love has no gift so grateful as his wings:
How fair, how young, how soft soe'er he seem,
Full from the fount of Joy's delicious springs*
Some bitter o'er the flowers its bubbling venom flings.

* "—— Medio de fonte leporum.
Surgit amari aliquid quod in ipsis floribus angat."—Luc.

LXXXIII.

Yet to the beauteous form he was not blind,
Though now it moved him as it moves the wise;
Not that Philosophy on such a mind
E'er deign'd to bend her chastely-awful eyes:
But Passion raves itself to rest, or flies;
And Vice, that digs her own voluptuous tomb,
Had buried long his hopes, no more to rise:
Pleasure's pall'd victim! life-abhorring gloom
Wrote on his faded brow curst Cain's unresting doom.

LXXXIV.

Still he beheld, nor mingled with the throng;
But view'd them not with misanthropic hate:
Fain would he now have join'd the dance, the song;
But who may smile that sinks beneath his fate?
Nought that he saw his sadness could abate:
Yet once he struggled 'gainst the demon's sway,
And as in Beauty's bower he pensive sate,
Pour'd forth this unpremeditated lay,
To charms as fair as those that soothed his happier day.

TO INEZ.

1.

Nay, smile not at my sullen brow;
Alas! I cannot smile again:
Yet Heaven avert that ever thou
Shouldst weep, and haply weep in vain.

2.

And dost thou ask, what secret woe
I bear, corroding joy and youth?
And wilt thou vainly seek to know
A pang, even thou must fail to soothe?

3.

It is not love, it is not hate,
Nor low Ambition's honors lost,
That bids me loathe my present state,
And fly from all I prized the most:

4.

It is that weariness which springs
From all I meet, or hear, or see:
To me no pleasure Beauty brings;
Thine eyes have scarce a charm for me.

5.

It is that settled, ceaseless gloom,
The fabled Hebrew wanderer bore:
That will not look beyond the tomb,
But cannot hope for rest before.

6.

What Exile from himself can flee?
To zones, though more and more remote,
Still, still pursues, where'er I be,
The blight of life—the demon thought.

7.

Yet others rapt in pleasure seem,
And taste of all that I forsake;
Oh! may they still of transport dream,
And ne'er, at least like me, awake!

8.

Through many a clime 'tis mine to go,
With many a retrospection curst;
And all my solace is to know,
Whate'er betides, I've known the worst.

9.

What is that worst? Nay, do not ask—
In pity from the search forbear:
Smile on—nor venture to unmask
Man's heart, and view the Hell that's there.

LXXXV.

Adieu, fair Cadiz! yea, a long adieu!
Who may forget how well thy walls have stood?
When all were changing thou alone wert true,
First to be free, and last to be subdued:
And if amidst a scene, a shock so rude,
Some native blood was seen thy streets to dye;
A traitor only fell beneath the feud:*
Here all were noble, save Nobility;
None hugg'd a conqueror's chain, save fallen Chivalry!

LXXXVI.

Such be the sons of Spain, and strange her fate!
They fight for freedom, who were never free;
A kingless people for a nerveless state,
Her vassals combat when their chieftains flee.
True to the veriest slaves of Treachery;
Fond of a land which gives them nought but life,
Pride points the path that leads to liberty;
Back to the struggle, baffled in the strife;
War, war is still the cry, "War even to the knife!"†

LXXXVII.

Ye, who would more of Spain and Spaniards know,
Go, read whate'er is writ of bloodiest strife:
Whate'er keen Vengeance urged on foreign foe
Can act, is acting there against man's life:
From flashing scimitar to secret knife,

* Alluding to the conduct and death of Solano, the governor of Cadiz, in May, 1809.

† Palafox's answer to the French general at the siege of Saragossa.

War mouldeth there each weapon to his need—
So may he guard the sister and the wife,
So may he make each curst oppressor bleed,
So may such foes deserve the most remorseless deed!

LXXXVIII.

Flows there a tear of pity for the dead?
Look o'er the ravage of the reeking plain:
Look on the hands with female slaughter red;
Then to the dogs resign the unburied slain,
Then to the vulture let each corse remain;
Albeit unworthy of the prey-bird's maw,
Let their bleach'd bones, and blood's unbleaching stain,
Long mark the battlefield with hideous awe:
Thus only may our sons conceive the scenes we saw!

LXXXIX.

Nor yet, alas! the dreadful work is done;
Fresh legions pour adown the Pyrenees:
It deepens still, the work is scarce begun,
Nor mortal eye the distant end foresees.
Fallen nations gaze on Spain; if freed, she frees
More than her fell Pizarros once enchain'd:
Strange retribution! now Columbia's ease
Repairs the wrongs that Quito's sons sustain'd,
While o'er the parent clime prowls Murder unrestrain'd.

XC.

Not all the blood at Talavera shed,
Not all the marvels of Barossa's fight,
Not Albuera lavish of the dead,
Have won for Spain her well-asserted right.
When shall her Olive-Branch be free from blight?
When shall she breathe her from the blushing toil?
How many a doubtful day shall sink in night,
Ere the Frank robber turn him from his spoil,
And Freedom's stranger-tree grow native of the soil?

XCI.

And thou, my friend!—since unavailing woe
Bursts from my heart, and mingles with the strain—
Had the sword laid thee with the mighty low,
Pride might forbid e'en Friendship to complain:
But thus unlaureil'd to descend in vain,
By all forgotten, save the lonely breast,
And mix unbleeding with the boasted slain,
While glory crowns so many a meaner crest!
What hadst thou done to sink so peacefully to rest?

XCII.

Oh, known the earliest, and esteem'd the most!
Dear to a heart where nought was left so dear!
Though to my hopeless days for ever lost,
In dreams deny me not to see thee here!
And Morn in secret shall renew the tear
Of Consciousness awaking to her woes,

And Fancy hover o'er thy bloodless bier,
Till my frail frame return to whence it rose,
And mourn'd and mourner lie united in repose.

XCIII.

Here is one fytte of Harold's pilgrimage:
Ye who of him may further seek to know,
Shall find some tidings in a future page,
If he that rhymeth now may scribble moe.
Is this too much? stern Critic! say not so:
Patience! and ye shall hear what he beheld
In other lands where he was doom'd to go:
Lands that contain the monuments of Eld,
Ere Greece and Grecian arts by barbarous hands were quell'd.

CANTO THE SECOND.

I.

COME, blue-eyed maid of heaven!—but thou, alas!
Didst never yet one mortal song inspire—
Goddess of Wisdom! here thy temple was,
And is, despite of war and wasting fire,*
And years, that bade thy worship to expire:
But worse than steel, and flame, and ages slow
Is the dread sceptre and dominion dire
Of men who never felt the sacred glow
That thoughts of thee and thine on polish'd breasts bestow.

II.

Ancient of days! august Athena! where,†
Where are thy men of might? thy grand in soul?

* Part of the Acropolis was destroyed by the explosion of a magazine during the Venetian siege.

† We can all feel, or imagine, the regret with which the ruins of cities, once the capitals of empires, are beheld: the reflections suggested by such objects are too trite to require recapitulation. But never did the littleness of man, and the vanity of his very best virtues—of patriotism to exalt, and of valor to defend his country—appear more conspicuous than in the record of what Athens was, and the certainty of what she now is. This theatre of contention between mighty factions, of the struggles of orators, the exaltation and deposition of tyrants, the triumph and punishment of generals, is now become a scene of petty intrigue and perpetual disturbance, between the bickering agents of certain British nobility and gentry. "The wild foxes, the owls and serpents in the ruins of Babylon," were surely less degrading than such inhabitants. The Turks have the plea of conquest for their tyranny, and the Greeks have only suffered the fortune of war incidental to the bravest; but how are the mighty fallen, when two painters contest the privilege of plundering the Parthenon, and triumph in turn, according to the tenor of each succeeding firman! Sylla could but punish, Philip subdue, and Xerxes burn Athens; but it remained for the paltry antiquarian, and his despicable agents, to render her contemptible as himself and his pursuits. The Parthenon, before its destruction in part by fire during the Venetian siege, had been a temple, a church, and a mosque. In each point of view it is an object of regard: it changed its worshippers, but still it was a place of worship thrice sacred to devotion: its violation is a triple sacrifice. But—

"Man, proud man,
Dress'd in a little brief authority,
Plays such fantastic tricks before high Heaven
As make the angels weep."

Gone—glimmering through the dream of things that were:
First in the race that led to Glory's goal,
They won, and pass'd away—is this the whole?
A schoolboy's tale, the wonder of an hour!
The warrior's weapon and the sophist's stole
Are sought in vain, and o'er each mouldering tower,
Dim with the mist of years, gray flits the shade of power.

III.

Son of the morning, rise! approach you here!
Come—but molest not yon defenceless urn:
Look on this spot—a nation's sepulchre!
Abode of gods, whose shrines no longer burn.
Even gods must yield—religions take their turn;
'Twas Jove's—'Tis Mohammed's—and other creeds
Will rise with other years, till man shall learn
Vainly his incense soars, his victim bleeds;
Poor child of Doubt and Death, whose hope is built on reeds.

IV.

Bound to the earth, he lifts his eye to heaven—
Is't not enough, unhappy thing! to know
Thou art? Is this a boon so kindly given,
That being, thou wouldst be again, and go,
Thou know'st not, reck'st not to what region, so
On earth no more, but mingled with the skies!
Still wilt thou dream on future joy and woe?
Regard and weigh yon dust before it flies:
That little urn saith more than thousand homilies.

V.

Or burst the vanish'd Hero's lofty mound;
Far on the solitary shore he sleeps:*
He fell, and falling nations mourn'd around;
But now not one of saddening thousands weeps,
Nor warlike worshipper his vigil keeps
Where demi-gods appear'd, as records tell.
Remove yon skull from out the scatter'd heaps:
Is that a temple where a God may dwell?
Why, even the worm at last disdains her shatter'd cell!

VI.

Look on its broken arch, its ruin'd wall,
Its chambers desolate, and portals foul:
Yes, this was once Ambition's airy hall,
The dome of Thought, the palace of the Soul:
Behold through each lack-lustre, eyeless hole,
The gay recess of Wisdom and of Wit,
And Passion's host, that never brook'd control:
Can all saint, sage, or sophist ever writ,
People this lonely tower, this tenement refit?

* It was not always the custom of the Greeks to burn their dead: the greater Ajax, in particular, was interred entire. Almost all the chiefs became gods after their decease; and he was indeed neglected, who had not annual games near his tomb, or festivals in honor of his memory by his countrymen, as Achilles, Brasidas, &c., and at last even Antinous, whose death was as heroic as his life was infamous.

VII.

Well didst thou speak, Athena's wisest son!
"All that we know is, nothing can be known."
Why should we shrink from what we cannot shun?
Each hath his pang, but feeble sufferers groan
With brain-born dreams of evil all their own.
Pursue what Chance or Fate proclaimeth best;
Peace waits us on the shores of Acheron:
There no forced banquet claims the sated guest,
But Silence spreads the couch of ever welcome rest.

VIII.

Yet if, as holiest men have deem'd, there be
A land of souls beyond that sable shore,
To shame the doctrine of the Sadducee
And sophists, madly vain of dubious lore;
How sweet it were in concert to adore
With those who made our mortal labors light!
To hear each voice we fear'd to hear no more!
Behold each mighty shade reveal'd to sight,
The Bactrian, Samian sage, and all who taught the right!

IX.

There, thou!—whose love and life together fled,
Have left me here to love and live in vain—
Twined with my heart, and can I deem thee dead,
When busy memory flashes on my brain?
Well—I will dream that we may meet again,
And woo the vision to my vacant breast:
If aught of young Remembrance then remain,
Be as it may Futurity's behest,
For me 'twere bliss enough to know thy spirit blest!

X.

Here let me sit upon this massy stone,
The marble column's yet unshaken base!
Here, son of Saturn! was thy favorite throne! *
Mightiest of many such! Hence let me trace
The latent grandeur of thy dwelling-place.
It may not be: nor even can Fancy's eye
Restore what Time hath labor'd to deface,
Yet these proud pillars claim no passing sigh;
Unmoved the Moslem sits, the light Greek carols by.

XI.

But who, of all the plunderers of yon fane
On high, where Pallas linger'd, loth to flee,
The latest relic of her ancient reign;
The last, the worst, dull spoiler, who was he?
Blush, Caledonia! such thy son could be!
England! I joy no child he was of thine:
Thy free-born men should spare what once was free;
Yet they could violate each saddening shrine,
And bear these altars o'er the long-reluctant brine.

* The temple of Jupiter Olympus, of which sixteen columns, entirely of marble, yet survive; originally there were one hundred and fifty. These columns, however, are by many supposed to have belonged to the Pantheon.

XII.

But most the modern Pict's ignoble boast,
To rive what Goth, and Turk, and Time hath spared:
Cold as the crags upon his native coast,
His mind as barren and his heart as hard,
Is he whose head conceived, whose hand prepared,
Aught to displace Athena's poor remains:
Her sons too weak the sacred shrine to guard,
Yet felt some portion of their mother's pains,
And never knew, till then, the weight of Despot's chains.

XIII.

What! shall it e'er be said by British tongue,
Albion was happy in Athena's tears?
Though in thy name the slaves her bosom wrung,
Tell not the deed to blushing Europe's ears;
The ocean queen, the free Britannia, bears
The last poor plunder from a bleeding land:
Yes, she, whose generous aid her name endears,
Tore down those remnants with a harpy's hand,
Which envious Eld forbore, and tyrants left to stand.

XIV.

Where was thine Ægis, Pallas! that appall'd
Stern Alaric and Havoc on their way?*
Where Peleus' son? whom Hell in vain enthrall'd,
His shade from Hades upon that dread day
Bursting to light in terrible array!
What! could not Pluto spare the chief once more,
To scare a second robber from his prey?
Idly he wander'd on the Stygian shore,
Nor now preserved the walls he loved to shield before.

XV.

Cold is the heart, fair Greece! that looks on thee,
Nor feels as lovers o'er the dust they loved;
Dull is the eye that will not weep to see
Thy walls defaced, thy mouldering shrines removed
By British hands, which it had best behoved
To guard those relics ne'er to be restored.
Curst be the hour when from their isle they roved,
And once again thy hapless bosom gored,
And snatch'd thy shrinking gods to northern climes abhorr'd!

XVI.

But where is Harold? Shall I then forget
To urge the gloomy wanderer o'er the wave?
Little reck'd he of all that men regret;
No loved one now in feign'd lament could rave;
No friend the parting hand extended gave,
Ere the cold stranger pass'd to other climes:
Hard is his heart whom charms may not enslave;
But Harold felt not as in other times,
And left without a sigh the land of war and crimes.

* According to Zosimus, Minerva and Achilles frightened Alaric from the Acropolis; but others relate that the Gothic king was nearly as mischievous as the Scottish peer.—See Chandler.

XVII.

He that has sail'd upon the dark blue sea,
Has view'd at times, I ween, a full fair sight;
When the fresh breeze is fair as breeze may be,
The white sail set, the gallant frigate tight;
Masts, spires, and strand retiring to the right.
The glorious main expanding o'er the bow,
The convoy spread like wild swans in their flight,
The dullest sailer wearing bravely now,
So gaily curl the waves before each dashing prow.

XVIII.

And oh, the little warlike world within!
The well-reeved guns, the netted canopy,*
The hoarse command, the busy humming din,
When, at a word, the tops are mann'd on high:
Hark to the Boatswain's call, the cheering cry!
While through the seaman's hand the tackle glides;
Or schoolboy Midshipman that, standing by,
Strains his shrill pipe, as good or ill betides,
And well the docile crew that skilful urchin guides.

XIX.

White is the glassy deck, without a stain,
Where on the watch the staid Lieutenant walks:
Look on that part which sacred doth remain
For the lone Chieftain, who majestic stalks,
Silent and fear'd by all—not oft he talks
With aught beneath him, if he would preserve
That strict restraint, which broken, ever balks
Conquest and Fame: but Britons rarely swerve
From law, however stern, which tends their strength to nerve.

XX.

Blow! swiftly blow, thou keel-compelling gale!
Till the broad sun withdraws his lessening ray;
Then must the pennant-bearer slacken sail,
That lagging barks may make their lazy way.
Ah! grievance sore, and listless dull delay,
To waste on sluggish hulks the sweetest breeze!
What leagues are lost before the dawn of day,
Thus loitering pensive on the willing seas,
The flapping sail haul'd down to halt for logs like these!

XXI.

The moon is up; by Heaven a lovely eve!
Long streams of light o'er dancing waves expand;
Now lads on shore may sigh, and maids believe:
Such be our fate when we return to land!
Meantime some rude Arion's restless hand
Wakes the brisk harmony that sailors love;
A circle there of merry listeners stand,
Or to some well-known measure featly move,
Thoughtless, as if on shore they still were free to rove.

* To prevent blocks or splinters from falling on deck during action.

XXII.

Through Calpe's straits survey the steepy shore;
Europe and Afric on each other gaze!
Lands of the dark-eyed Maid and dusky Moor
Alike beheld beneath pale Hecate's blaze:
How softly on the Spanish shore she plays,
Disclosing rock, and slope, and forest brown,
Distinct, though darkening with her waning phase;
But Mauritania's giant-shadows frown,
From mountain-cliff to coast descending sombre down.

XXIII.

'Tis night, when Meditation bids us feel
We once have loved, though love is at an end:
The heart, lone mourner of its baffled zeal,
Though friendless now, will dream it had a friend.
Who with the weight of years would wish to bend,
When Youth itself survives young Love and joy?
Alas! when mingling souls forget to blend,
Death hath but little left him to destroy!
Ah! happy years! once more who would not be a boy?

XXIV.

Thus bending o'er the vessel's laving side,
To gaze on Dian's wave-reflected sphere,
The soul forgets her schemes of Hope and Pride,
And flies unconscious o'er each backward year.
None are so desolate but something dear,
Dearer than self, possesses or possess'd
A thought, and claims the homage of a tear;
A flashing pang! of which the weary breast
Would still, albeit in vain, the heavy heart divest.

XXV.

To sit on rocks, to muse o'er flood and fell,
To slowly trace the forest's shady scene,
Where things that own not man's dominion dwell,
And mortal foot hath ne'er or rarely been;
To climb the trackless mountain all unseen,
With the wild flock that never needs a fold;
Alone o'er steeps and foaming falls to lean;
This is not solitude; 'tis but to hold
Converse with Nature's charms, and view her stores unroll'd.

XXVI.

But 'midst the crowd, the hum, the shock of men,
To hear, to see, to feel, and to possess,
And roam along, the world's tired denizen,
With none who bless us, none whom we can bless;
Minions of splendor shrinking from distress!
None that, with kindred consciousness endued,
If we were not, would seem to smile the less
Of all that flatter'd, follow'd, sought, and sued;
This is to be alone; this, this is solitude!

XXVII.

More blest the life of godly eremite,
Such as on lonely Athos may be seen,
Watching at eve upon the giant height,
Which looks o'er waves so blue, skies so serene,
That he who there at such an hour hath been
Will wistful linger on that hallow'd spot;
Then slowly tear him from the 'witching scene,
Sigh forth one wish that such had been his lot,
Then turn to hate a world he had almost forgot.

XXVIII.

Pass we the long, unvarying course, the track
Oft trod, that never leaves a trace behind;
Pass we the calm, the gale, the change, the tack,
And each well-known caprice of wave and wind;
Pass we the joys and sorrows sailors find,
Cooped in their winged sea-girt citadel;
The foul, the fair, the contrary, the kind,
As breezes rise and fall and billows swell,
Till on some jocund morn—lo, land! and all is well.

XXIX.

But not in silence pass Calypso's isles,*
The sister tenants of the middle deep;
There for the weary still a haven smiles,
Though the fair goddess long hath ceased to weep,
And o'er her cliffs a fruitless watch to keep
For him who dared prefer a mortal bride:
Here, too, his boy essay'd the dreadful leap
Stern Mentor urged from high to yonder tide;
While thus of both bereft, the nymph-queen doubly sigh'd.

XXX.

Her reign is past, her gentle glories gone:
But trust not this; too easy youth, beware!
A mortal sovereign holds her dangerous throne,
And thou may'st find a new Calypso there.
Sweet Florence! could another ever share
This wayward, loveless heart, it would be thine:
But check'd by every tie, I may not dare
To cast a worthless offering at thy shrine,
Nor ask so dear a breast to feel one pang for mine.

XXXI.

Thus Harold deem'd, as on that lady's eye
He look'd, and met its beam without a thought,
Save Admiration glancing harmless by:
Love kept aloof, albeit not far remote,
Who knew his votary often lost and caught,
But knew him as his worshipper no more,
And ne'er again the boy his bosom sought:
Since now he vainly urged him to adore,
Well deem'd the little god his ancient sway was o'er.

* Goza is said to have been the island of Calypso.

XXXII.

Fair Florence found, in sooth with some amaze,
One who, 'twas said, still sigh'd to all he saw,
Withstand, unmoved, the lustre of her gaze,
Which others hail'd with real or mimic awe,
Their hope, their doom, their punishment, their law;
All that gay Beauty from her bondsmen claims:
And much she marvell'd that a youth so raw
Nor felt, nor feign'd at least, the oft-told flames,
Which, though sometimes they frown, yet rarely anger dames.

XXXIII.

Little knew she that seeming marble heart,
Now mask'd in silence or withheld by pride,
Was not unskilful in the spoiler's art,
And spread its snares licentious far and wide;
Nor from the base pursuit had turn'd aside,
As long as aught was worthy to pursue:
But Harold on such arts no more relied;
And had he doted on those eyes so blue,
Yet never would he join the lover's whining crew.

XXXIV.

Not much he kens, I ween, of woman's breast,
Who thinks that wanton thing is won by sighs;
What careth she for hearts when once possess'd?
Do proper homage to thine idol's eyes;
But not too humbly, or she will despise
Thee and thy suit, though told in moving tropes;
Disguise even tenderness, if thou art wise;
Brisk Confidence still best with woman copes;
Pique her and soothe in turn, soon Passion crowns thy hopes.

XXXV.

'Tis an old lesson; Time approves it true,
And those who know it best deplore it most;
When all is won that all desire to woo,
The paltry prize is hardly worth the cost:
Youth wasted, minds degraded, honor lost,
These are thy fruits, successful Passion! these!
If, kindly cruel, early Hope is crost,
Still to the last it rankles, a disease,
Not to be cured when Love itself forgets to please.

XXXVI.

Away! nor let me loiter in my song,
For we have many a mountain-path to tread,
And many a varied shore to sail along,
By pensive Sadness, not by Fiction, led—
Climes, fair withal as ever mortal head
Imagined in its little schemes of thought;
Or e'er in new Utopias were ared,
To teach man what he might be, or he ought;
If that corrupted thing could ever such be taught.

XXXVII.

Dear Nature is the kindest mother still,
Though always changing, in her aspect mild:
From her bare bosom let me take my fill,
Her never-weanʼd, though not her favorʼd child.
Oh! she is fairest in her features wild,
Where nothing polishʼd dares pollute her path:
To me by day or night she ever smiled,
Though I have markʼd her when none other hath,
And sought her more and more, and loved her best in wrath.

XXXVIII.

Land of Albania! where Iskander rose!
Theme of the young, and beacon of the wise,
And he his namesake, whose oft-baffled foes
Shrunk from his deeds of chivalrous emprise:
Land of Albania! let me bend mine eyes
On thee, thou rugged nurse of savage men!
The cross descends, thy minarets arise,
And the pale crescent sparkles in the glen,
Through many a cypress grove within each city's ken.

XXXIX.

Childe Harold sailʼd, and passʼd the barren spot,
Where sad Penelope oʼerlookʼd the wave;*
And onward viewʼd the mount, not yet forgot,
The lover's refuge, and the Lesbian's grave.
Dark Sappho! could not verse immortal save
That breast imbued with such immortal fire?
Could she not live who life eternal gave?
If life eternal may await the lyre,
That only Heaven to which Earth's children may aspire.

XL.

'Twas on a Grecian autumn's gentle eve
Childe Harold hailʼd Leucadia's cape afar;†
A spot he longʼd to see, nor cared to leave:
Oft did he mark the scenes of vanishʼd war,
Actium, Lepanto, fatal Trafalgar:‡
Mark them unmoved, for he would not delight
(Born beneath some remote inglorious star)
In themes of bloody fray, or gallant fight,
But loathed the bravo's trade, and laughʼd at martial wight.

XLI.

But when he saw the evening star above
Leucadia's far-projecting rock of woe,
And hailʼd the last resort of fruitless love,
He felt, or deemʼd he felt, no common glow:

* Ithaca.

† Leucadia, now Santa Maura. From the promontory (the Lover's Leap) Sappho is said to have thrown herself.

‡ Actium and Trafalgar need no further mention. The battle of Lepanto, equally bloody and considerable, but less known, was fought in the Gulf of Patras. Here the author of Don Quixote lost his left hand.

And as the stately vessel glided slow
Beneath the shadow of that ancient mount,
He watch'd the billows' melancholy flow,
And, sunk albeit in thought as he was wont,
More placid seem'd his eye, and smooth his pallid front.

XLII.

Morn dawns; and with it stern Albania's hills,
Dark Suli's rocks, and Pindus' inland peak,
Robed half in mist, bedew'd with snowy rills,
Array'd in many a dun and purple streak,
Arise; and, as the clouds along them break,
Disclose the dwelling of the mountaineer:
Here roams the wolf, the eagle whets his beak,
Birds, beasts of prey, and wilder men appear,
And gathering storms around convulse the closing year.

XLIII.

Now Harold felt himself at length alone,
And bade to Christian tongues a long adieu:
Now he adventured on a shore unknown,
Which all admire, but many dread to view:
His breast was arm'd 'gainst fate, his wants were few;
Peril he sought not, but ne'er shrank to meet:
The scene was savage, but the scene was new;
This made the ceaseless toil of travel sweet,
Beat back keen winter's blast, and welcomed summer's heat.

XLIV.

Here the red cross, for still the cross is here,
Though sadly scoff'd at by the circumcised,
Forgets that pride to pamper'd priesthood dear;
Churchman and votary alike despised.
Foul Superstition! howsoe'er disguised,
Idol, saint, virgin, prophet, crescent, cross,
For whatsoever symbol thou art prized,
Thou sacerdotal gain, but general loss!
Who from true worship's gold can separate thy dross?

XLV.

Ambracia's gulf behold, where once was lost
A world for woman, lovely, harmless thing!
In yonder rippling bay, their naval host,
Did many a Roman chief and Asian king*
To doubtful conflict, certain slaughter bring:
Look where the second Cæsar's trophies rose! †
Now, like the hands that rear'd them, withering;
Imperial anarchs, doubling human woes!
GOD! was thy globe ordain'd for such to win and lose?

* It is said that, on the day previous to the battle of Actium, Anthony had thirteen kings at his levee.

† Nicopolis, whose ruins are most extensive, is at some distance from Actium, where the wall of the Hippodrome survives in a few fragments. These ruins are large masses of brickwork, the bricks of which are joined by interstices of mortar, as large as the bricks themselves, and equally durable.

XLVI.

From the dark barriers of that rugged clime,
Even to the centre of Illyria's vales,
Childe Harold pass'd o'er many a mount sublime,
Through lands scarce noticed in historic tales;
Yet in famed Attica such lovely dales
Are rarely seen; nor can fair Tempe boast
A charm they know not; loved Parnassus fails,
Though classic ground and consecrated most,
To match some spots that lurk within this louring coast.

XLVII.

He pass'd bleak Pindus, Acherusia's lake,*
And left the primal city of the land,
And onwards did his farther journey take
To greet Albania's chief, whose dread command †
Is lawless law; for with a bloody hand
He sways a nation, turbulent and bold:
Yet here and there some daring mountain-band
Disdain his power, and from their rocky hold
Hurl their defiance far, nor yield, unless to gold.‡

XLVIII.

Monastic Zitza! from thy shady brow,§
Thou small, but favor'd spot of holy ground!
Where'er we gaze, around, above, below,
What rainbow tints, what magic charms are found:
Rock, river, forest, mountain all abound,
And bluest skies that harmonize the whole:
Beneath, the distant torrent's rushing sound
Tells where the volumed cataract doth roll
Between those hanging rocks, that shock yet please the soul.

XLIX.

Amidst the grove that crowns yon tufted hill,
Which, were it not for many a mountain nigh
Rising in lofty ranks, and loftier still,
Might well itself be deem'd of dignity,
The convent's white walls glisten fair on high:
Here dwells the caloyer,‖ nor rude is he,
Nor niggard of his cheer; the passer-by
Is welcome still; nor heedless will he flee
From hence, if he delight kind Nature's sheen to see.

* According to Pouqueville, the lake of Yanina: but Pouqueville is always out.

† The celebrated Ali Pacha. Of this extraordinary man there is an incorrect account in Pouqueville's Travels.

‡ Five thousand Suliotes, among the rocks and in the castle of Suli, withstood thirty thousand Albanians for eighteen years; the castle at last was taken by bribery. In this contest there were several acts performed not unworthy of the better days of Greece.

§ The convent and village of Zitza are four hours' journey from Joannina, or Yanina, the capital of the pachalic. In the valley the river Kalamas (once the Acheron) flows, and not far from Zitza forms a fine cataract. The situation is perhaps the finest in Greece, though the approach to Delvinachi and parts of Acarnania and Ætolia may contest the palm. Delphi, Parnassus, and, in Attica, even Cape Colonna and Port Raphti, are very inferior; as also every scene in Ionia, or the Troad: I am almost inclined to add the approach to Constantinople; but, from the different features of the last, a comparison can hardly be made.

‖ The Greek monks are so called.

L.

Here in the sultriest season let him rest,
Fresh is the green beneath those aged trees;
Here winds of gentlest wing will fan his breast,
From heaven itself he may inhale the breeze:
The plain is far beneath—oh! let him seize
Pure pleasure while he can; the scorching ray
Here pierceth not, impregnate with disease:
Then let his length the loitering pilgrim lay,
And gaze, untired, the morn, the noon, the eve away.

LI.

Dusky and huge, enlarging on the sight,
Nature's volcanic amphitheatre,*
Chimæra's alps extend from left to right:
Beneath, a living valley seems to stir;
Flocks play, trees wave, streams flow, the mountain fir
Nodding above; behold black Acheron!†
Once consecrated to the sepulchre.
Pluto! if this be hell I look upon,
Close shamed Elysium's gates, my shade shall seek for none.

LII.

No city's towers pollute the lovely view;
Unseen is Yanina, though not remote,
Veil'd by the screen of hills: here men are few,
Scanty the hamlet, rare the lonely cot;
But, peering down each precipice, the goat
Browseth: and, pensive o'er his scatter'd flock,
The little shepherd in his white capote‡
Doth lean his boyish form along the rock,
Or in his cave awaits the tempest's short-lived shock.

LIII.

Oh! where, Dodona! is thine aged grove,
Prophetic fount, and oracle divine?
What valley echoed the response of Jove?
What trace remaineth of the Thunderer's shrine?
All, all forgotten—and shall man repine
That his frail bonds to fleeting life are broke?
Cease, fool! the fate of gods may well be thine:
Wouldst thou survive the marble or the oak?
When nations, tongues, and worlds must sink beneath
the stroke!

LIV.

Epirus' bounds recede, and mountains fail;
Tired of up-gazing still, the wearied eye
Reposes gladly on as smooth a vale
As ever Spring yclad in grassy dye:
Even on a plain no humble beauties lie,
Where some bold river breaks the long expanse,
And woods along the banks are waving high,
Whose shadows in the glassy waters dance,
Or with the moonbeam sleep in midnight's solemn trance.

* The Chimariot mountains appear to have been volcanic.
† Now called Kalamas.
‡ Albanese cloak.

LV.

The sun had sunk behind vast Tomerit,*
The Laos wide and fierce came rolling by;†
The shades of wonted night were gathering yet,
When, down the steep banks winding warily,
Childe Harold saw, like meteors in the sky,
The glittering minarets of Tepalen,
Whose walls o'erlook the stream; and drawing nigh,
He heard the busy hum of warrior-men
Swelling the breeze that sigh'd along the lengthening glen.

LVI.

He pass'd the sacred Harem's silent tower,
And underneath the wide o'erarching gate
Survey'd the dwelling of this chief of power,
Where all around proclaim'd his high estate.
Amidst no common pomp the despot sate,
While busy preparation shook the court,
Slaves, eunuchs, soldiers, guests, and santons wait;
Within, a palace, and without a fort:
Here men of every clime appear to make resort.

LVII.

Richly caparison'd, a ready row
Of armed horse, and many a warlike store,
Circled the wide-extending court below;
Above, strange groups adorn'd the corridor;
And oft-times through the area's echoing door,
Some high-capp'd Tartar spurr'd his steed away:
The Turk, the Greek, the Albanian, and the Moor,
Here mingled in their many-hued array,
While the deep war-drum's sound announced the close of day.

LVIII.

The wild Albanian kirtled to his knee,
With shawl-girt head and ornamented gun,
And gold-embroider'd garments, fair to see:
The crimson-scarfed men of Macedon;
The Delhi with his cap of terror on,
And crooked glaive; the lively, supple Greek
And swarthy Nubia's mutilated son;
The bearded Turk, that rarely deigns to speak,
Master of all around, too potent to be meek,

LIX.

Are mix'd conspicuous: some recline in groups,
Scanning the motley scene that varies round;
There some grave Moslem to devotion stoops,
And some that smoke, and some that play, are found;

* Anciently Mount Tomarus.

† The river Laos was full at the time the author passed it; and, immediately above Tepalen, was to the eye as wide as the Thames at Westminster; at least in the opinion of the author and his fellow-traveller. In the summer it must be much narrower. It certainly is the finest river in the Levant; neither Achelous, Alpheus, Acheron, Scamander, nor Cayster, approached it in breadth or beauty.

Here the Albanian proudly treads the ground;
Half-whispering there the Greek is heard to prate;
Hark! from the mosque the nightly solemn sound,
The Muezzin's call doth shake the minaret,
"There is no god but God!—to prayer—lo! God is great!"

LX.

Just at this season Ramazani's fast
Through the long day its penance did maintain.
But when the lingering twilight hour was past,
Revel and feast assumed the rule again:
Now all was bustle, and the menial train
Prepared and spread the plenteous board within;
The vacant gallery now seem'd made in vain,
But from the chambers came the mingling din,
As page and slave anon were passing out and in.

LXI.

Here woman's voice is never heard; apart,
And scarce permitted, guarded, veil'd, to move,
She yields to one her person and her heart,
Tamed to her cage, nor feels a wish to rove:
For, not unhappy in her master's love,
And joyful in a mother's gentlest cares,
Blest cares! all other feelings far above!
Herself more sweetly rears the babe she bears,
Who never quits the breast, no meaner passion shares.

LXII.

In marble-paved pavilion, where a spring
Of living water from the centre rose,
Whose bubbling did a genial freshness fling,
And soft voluptuous couches breathed repose,
Ali reclined, a man of war and woes:
Yet in his lineaments ye cannot trace,
While Gentleness her milder radiance throws
Along that aged venerable face,
The deeds that lurk beneath, and stain him with disgrace.

LXIII.

It is not that yon hoary lengthening beard
Ill suits the passions which belong to youth:
Love conquers age—so Hafiz hath averr'd,
So sings the Teian, and he sings in sooth—
But crimes that scorn the tender voice of ruth,
Beseeming all men ill, but most the man
In years, have mark'd him with a tiger's tooth:
Blood follows blood, and through their mortal span,
In bloodier acts conclude those who with blood began.

LXIV.

'Mid many things most new to ear and eye
The pilgrim rested here his weary feet,
And gazed around on Moslem luxury,
Till quickly wearied with that spacious seat

Of Wealth and Wantonness, the choice retreat
Of sated Grandeur from the city's noise:
And were it humbler, it in sooth were sweet;
But Peace abhorreth artificial joys,
And Pleasure, leagued with Pomp, the zest of both destroys.

LXV.

Fierce are Albania's children, yet they lack
Not virtues, were those virtues more mature.
Where is the foe that ever saw their back?
Who can so well the toil of war endure?
Their native fastnesses not more secure
Than they in doubtful time of troublous need:
Their wrath how deadly! but their friendship sure,
When Gratitude or Valor bids them bleed,
Unshaken rushing on where'er their chief may lead.

LXVI.

Childe Harold saw them in their chieftain's tower,
Thronging to war in splendor and success;
And after view'd them, when, within their power,
Himself a while the victim of distress;
That saddening hour when bad men hotlier press:
But these did shelter him beneath their roof,
When less barbarians would have cheer'd him less,
And fellow-countrymen have stood aloof—*
In aught that tries the heart how few withstand the proof!

LXVII.

It chanced that adverse winds once drove his bark
Full on the coast of Suli's shaggy shore,
When all around was desolate and dark;
To land was perilous, to sojourn more;
Yet for a while the mariners forbore,
Dubious to trust where treachery might lurk:
At length they ventured forth, though doubting sore
That those who loathe alike the Frank and Turk
Might once again renew their ancient butcher-work.

LXVIII.

Vain fear! the Suliotes stretch'd the welcome hand,
Led them o'er rocks and past the dangerous swamp,
Kinder than polish'd slaves though not so bland,
And piled the hearth, and wrung their garments damp,
And fill'd the bowl, and trimm'd the cheerful lamp,
And spread their fare: though homely, all they had:
Such conduct bears Philanthropy's rare stamp—
To rest the weary and to soothe the sad,
Doth lesson happier men, and shames at least the bad.

LXIX.

It came to pass, that when he did address
Himself to quit at length this mountain-land,
Combined marauders half-way barr'd egress,
And wasted far and near with glaive and brand;

* Alluding to the wreckers of Cornwall.

And therefore did he take a trusty band
To traverse Acarnania's forest wide,
In war well season'd, and with labors tann'd,
Till he did greet white Achelous' tide,
And from his farther bank Ætolia's wolds espied.

LXX.

Where lone Utraikey forms its circling cove,
And weary waves retire to gleam at rest,
How brown the foliage of the green hill's grove,
Nodding at midnight o'er the calm bay's breast,
As winds come whispering lightly from the west,
Kissing, not ruffling, the blue deep's serene:
Here Harold was received a welcome guest;
Nor did he pass unmoved the gentle scene,
For many a joy could he from Night's soft presence glean.

LXXI.

On the smooth shore the night-fires brightly blazed,
The feast was done, the red wine circling fast,*
And he that unawares had there ygazed
With gaping wonderment had stared aghast;
For ere night's midmost, stillest hour was past,
The native revels of the troop began;
Each Palikar† his sabre from him cast,
And bounding hand in hand, man link'd to man,
Yelling their uncouth dirge, long daunced the kirtled clan.

LXXII.

Childe Harold at a little distance stood,
And view'd, but not displeased, the revelrie,
Nor hated harmless mirth, however rude:
In sooth, it was no vulgar sight to see
Their barbarous, yet their not indecent, glee:
And, as the flames along their faces gleam'd,
Their gestures nimble, dark eyes flashing free,
The long wild locks that to their girdles stream'd,
While thus in concert they this lay half sang, half scream'd:—

1.

Tambourgi! Tambourgi! ‡ thy larum afar
Gives hope to the valiant, and promise of war;
All the sons of the mountains arise at the note,
Chimariot, Illyrian, and dark Suliote! §

2.

Oh! who is more brave than a dark Suliote,
In his snowy camese and his shaggy capote?
To the wolf and the vulture he leaves his wild flock,
And descends to the plain like the stream from the rock.

* The Albanian Mussulmans do not abstain from wine, and, indeed, very few of the others.

† "Palikar," a general name for a soldier amongst the Greeks and Albanese who speak Romaic: it means, properly, "a lad." ‡ Drummer.

§ These stanzas are partly taken from different Albanese songs, so far as I was able to make them out by the exposition of the Albanese in Romaic and Italian.

3.

Shall the sons of Chimari, who never forgive
The fault of a friend, bid an enemy live?
Let those guns so unerring such vengeance forego?
What mark is so fair as the breast of a foe?

4.

Macedonia sends forth her invincible race;
For a time they abandon the cave and the chase:
But those scarfs of blood-red shall be redder, before
The sabre is sheathed and the battle is o'er.

5.

Then the pirates of Parga that dwell by the waves,
And teach the pale Franks what it is to be slaves,
Shall leave on the beach the long galley and oar,
And track to his covert the captive on shore.

6.

I ask not the pleasures that riches supply,
My sabre shall win what the feeble must buy;
Shall win the young bride with her long flowing hair,
And many a maid from her mother shall tear.

7.

I love the fair face of the maid in her youth,
Her caresses shall lull me, her music shall soothe:
Let her bring from her chamber the many-toned lyre,
And sing us a song on the fall of her sire.

8.

Remember the moment when Previsa fell,*
The shrieks of the conquer'd, the conquerors' yell;
The roofs that we fired, and the plunder we shared,
The wealthy we slaughter'd, the lovely we spared.

9.

I talk not of mercy, I talk not of fear;
He neither must know who would serve the Vizier:
Since the days of our Prophet the Crescent ne'er saw
A chief ever glorious like Ali Pashaw.

10.

Dark Muchtar his son to the Danube is sped,
Let the yellow-hair'd† Giaours view his horse-tail with dread,
When his Delhis come dashing in blood o'er the banks,
How few shall escape from the Muscovite ranks!

11.

Selictar!‡ unsheathe then our chief's scimitar:
Tambourgi! thy larum gives promise of war.
Ye mountains, that see us descend to the shore,
Shall view us as victors, or view us no more!

* It was taken by storm from the French.
† Yellow is the epithet given to the Russians.
‡ "Selictar," swordbearer.

LXXIII.

Fair Greece! sad relic of departed worth!
Immortal, though no more; though fallen, great:
Who now shall lead thy scatter'd children forth,
And long accustom'd bondage uncreate?
Not such thy sons who whilom did await,
The hopeless warriors of a willing doom,
In bleak Thermopylæ's sepulchral strait—
Oh! who that gallant spirit shall resume,
Leap from Eurotas' banks, and call thee from the tomb?

LXXIV.

Spirit of Freedom! when on Phyle's brow*
Thou sat'st with Thrasybulus and his train,
Couldst thou forebode the dismal hour which now
Dims the green beauties of thine Attic plain?
Not thirty tyrants now enforce the chain,
But every carle can lord it o'er thy land;
Nor rise thy sons, but idly rail in vain,
Trembling beneath the scourge of Turkish hand,
From birth till death enslaved; in word, in deed, unmann'd.

LXXV.

In all save form alone, how changed! and who
That marks the fire still sparkling in each eye,
Who but would deem their bosoms burn'd anew
With thy unquenched beam, lost Liberty!
And many dream withal the hour is nigh
That gives them back their fathers' heritage:
For foreign arms and aid they fondly sigh,
Nor solely dare encounter hostile rage,
Or tear their name defiled from Slavery's mournful page.

LXXVI.

Hereditary bondsmen! know ye not
Who would be free themselves must strike the blow?
By their right arms the conquest must be wrought?
Will Gaul or Muscovite redress ye? no!
True, they may lay your proud despoilers low,
But not for you will Freedom's altars flame.
Shades of the Helots! triumph o'er your foe:
Greece! change thy lords, thy state is still the same;
Thy glorious day is o'er, but not thine years of shame.

LXXVII.

The city won for Allah from the Giaour,
The Giaour from Othman's race again may wrest;
And the Serai's impenetrable tower
Receive the fiery Frank, her former guest;†
Or Wahab's rebel brood, who dared divest
The Prophet's tomb of all its pious spoil,‡

* Phyle, which commands a beautiful view of Athens, has still considerable remains. It was seized by Thrasybulus, previous to the expulsion of the Thirty.

† When taken by the Latins, and retained for several years.

‡ Mecca and Medina were taken some time ago by the Wahabees, a sect yearly increasing.

May wind their path of blood along the West;
But ne'er will freedom seek this fated soil,
But slave succeed to slave through years of endless toil.

LXXVIII.

Yet mark their mirth—ere lenten day begin,
That penance which their holy rites prepare
To shrive from man his weight of mortal sin,
By daily abstinence and nightly prayer;
But ere his sackcloth garb Repentance wear,
Some days of joyaunce are decreed to all,
To take of pleasaunce each his secret share,
In motley robe to dance at masking ball,
And join the mimic train of merry Carnival.

LXXIX.

And whose more rife with merriment than thine,
O Stamboul! once the empress of their reign?
Though turbans now pollute Sophia's shrine,
And Greece her very altars eyes in vain:
(Alas! her woes will still pervade my strain!)
Gay were her minstrels once, for free her throng,
All felt the common joy they now must feign,
Nor oft I've seen such sight, nor heard such song,
As woo'd the eye, and thrill'd the Bosphorus along.

LXXX.

Loud was the lightsome tumult on the shore,
Oft Music changed, but never ceased her tone,
And timely echo'd back the measured oar,
And rippling waters made a pleasant moan:
The Queen of tides on high consenting shone,
And when a transient breeze swept o'er the wave,
'Twas, as if darting from her heavenly throne,
A brighter glance her form reflected gave,
Till sparkling billows seem'd to light the banks they lave.

LXXXI.

Glanced many a light caïque along the foam,
Danced on the shore the daughters of the land,
Ne thought had man or maid of rest or home,
While many a languid eye and thrilling hand
Exchanged the look few bosoms may withstand,
Or gently prest, return'd the pressure still:
Oh Love! young Love! bound in thy rosy band,
Let sage or cynic prattle as he will,
These hours, and only these, redeem Life's years of ill!

LXXXII.

But, 'midst the throng in merry masquerade,
Lurk there no hearts that throb with secret pain,
Even through the closest cerement half betray'd?
To such the gentle murmurs of the main

Seem to re-echo all they mourn in vain;
To such the gladness of the gamesome crowd
Is source of wayward thought and stern disdain:
How do they loathe the laughter idly loud,
And long to change the robe of revel for the shroud!

LXXXIII.

This must he feel, the true-born son of Greece,
If Greece one true-born patriot still can boast:
Not such as prate of war, but skulk in peace,
The bondsman's peace, who sighs for all he lost,
Yet with smooth smile his tyrant can accost,
And wield the slavish sickle, not the sword:
Ah! Greece! they love thee least who owe thee most;
Their birth, their blood, and that sublime record
Of hero sires, who shame thy now degenerate horde!

LXXXIV.

When riseth Lacedæmon's hardihood,
When Thebes Epaminondas rears again,
When Athens' children are with hearts endued,
When Grecian mothers shall give birth to men,
Then mayst thou be restored; but not till then.
A thousand years scarce serve to form a state;
An hour may lay it in the dust: and when
Can man its shatter'd splendor renovate,
Recall its virtues back, and vanquish Time and Fate?

LXXXV.

And yet how lovely in thine age of woe,
Land of lost gods and godlike men—art thou!
Thy vales of evergreen, thy hills of snow,*
Proclaim thee Nature's varied favorite now;
Thy fanes, thy temples to thy surface bow,
Commingling slowly with heroic earth,
Broke by the share of every rustic plough:
So perish monuments of mortal birth,
So perish all in turn, save well-recorded Worth;

LXXXVI.

Save where some solitary column mourns
Above its prostrate brethren of the cave;†
Save where Tritonia's airy shrine adorns
Colonna's cliff, and gleams along the wave;‡
Save o'er some warrior's half-forgotten grave,

* On many of the mountains, particularly Liakura, the snow never is entirely melted, notwithstanding the intense heat of the summer; but I never saw it lie on the plains, even in winter.

† Of Mount Pentelicus, from whence the marble was dug that constructed the public edifices of Athens. The modern name is Mount Mendeli. An immense cave, formed by the quarries, still remains, and will till the end of time.

‡ In all Attica, if we except Athens itself and Marathon, there is no scene more interesting than Cape Colonna. To the antiquary and artist, sixteen columns are an inexhaustible source of observation and design; to the philosopher, the supposed scene of some of Plato's conversations will not be unwelcome: and the traveller will be struck with the beauty of the prospect over "Isles that crown the Ægean deep:" but, for an Englishman, Colonna has yet an additional

Where the gray stones and unmolested grass
Ages, but not oblivion, feebly brave,
While strangers only not regardless pass,
Lingering like me, perchance, to gaze, and sigh "Alas!"

LXXXVII.

Yet are thy skies as blue, thy crags as wild:
Sweet are thy groves, and verdant are thy fields,
Thine olive ripe as when Minerva smiled,
And still his honey'd wealth Hymettus yields;
There the blithe bee his fragrant fortress builds,
The freeborn wanderer of thy mountain-air;
Apollo still thy long, long summer gilds,
Still in his beam Mendeli's marbles glare;
Art, Glory, Freedom fail, but Nature still is fair.

LXXXVIII.

Where'er we tread 'tis haunted, holy ground;
No earth of thine is lost in vulgar mould,
But one vast realm of wonder spreads around,
And all the Muse's tales seem truly told,
Till the sense aches with gazing to behold
The scenes our earliest dreams have dwelt upon:
Each hill and dale, each deepening glen and wold,
Defies the power which crush'd thy temples gone:
Age shakes Athena's tower, but spares gray Marathon.

LXXXIX.

The sun, the soil, but not the slave, the same;
Unchanged in all except its foreign lord—
Preserves alike its bounds and boundless fame;
The Battlefield, where Persia's victim horde
First bow'd beneath the brunt of Hellas' sword,
As on the morn to distant Glory dear,
When Marathon became a magic word;*
Which utter'd, to the hearer's eye appear
The camp, the host, the fight, the conqueror's career.

Interest, as the actual spot of Falconer's "Shipwreck." Pallas and Plato are forgotten, in the recollection of Falconer and Campbell:—

"Here in the dead of night by Lonna's steep,
The seaman's cry was heard along the deep."

This temple of Minerva may be seen at sea from a great distance. In two journeys which I made, and one voyage to Cape Colonna, the view from either side, by land, was more striking than the approach from the isles. In our second land excursion we had a narrow escape from a party of Mainotes, concealed in the caverns beneath. We were told afterwards by one of their prisoners, subsequently ransomed, that they were deterred from attacking us by the appearance of my two Albanians: conjecturing very sagaciously, but falsely, that we had a complete guard of these Arnaouts at hand, they remained stationary, and thus saved our party, which was too small to have opposed any effectual resistance. Colonna is no less a resort of painters than of pirates; there

"The hireling artist plants his paltry desk,
And makes degraded nature picturesque."

(See Hodgson's *Lady Jane Grey*, &c.)

But there Nature, with the aid of Art, has done that for herself. I was fortunate enough to engage a very superior German artist; and hope to renew my acquaintance with this and many other Levantine scenes, by the arrival of his performances.

* "Siste Viator—heroa calcas!" was the epitaph on the famous Count Merci;—what, then, must be our feelings when standing on the tumulus of the

XC.

The flying Mede, his shaftless broken bow;
The fiery Greek, his red pursuing spear;
Mountains above, Earth's, Ocean's plain below;
Death in the front, Destruction in the rear!
Such was the scene—what now remaineth here?
What sacred trophy marks the hallow'd ground,
Recording Freedom's smile and Asia's tear?
The rifled urn, the violated mound,
The dust thy courser's hoof, rude stranger, spurns around.

XCI.

Yet to the remnants of thy splendor past
Shall pilgrims, pensive, but unwearied, throng;
Long shall the voyager, with th' Ionian blast,
Hail the bright clime of battle and of song;
Long shall thine annals and immortal tongue
Fill with thy fame the youth of many a shore:
Boast of the aged! lesson of the young!
Which sages venerate and bards adore,
As Pallas and the Muse unveil their awful lore.

XCII.

The parted bosom clings to wonted home,
If aught that's kindred cheer the welcome hearth;
He that is lonely, hither let him roam,
And gaze complacent on congenial earth.
Greece is no lightsome land of social mirth;
But he whom Sadness sootheth may abide,
And scarce regret the region of his birth,
When wandering slow by Delphi's sacred side,
Or gazing o'er the plains where Greek and Persian died.

XCIII.

Let such approach this consecrated land,
And pass in peace along the magic waste:
But spare its relics—let no busy hand
Deface the scenes, already how defaced!
Not for such purpose were these altars placed.
Revere the remnants nations once revered:
So may our country's name be undisgraced,
So mayst thou prosper where thy youth was rear'd,
By every honest joy of love and life endear'd!

XCIV.

For thee, who thus in too protracted song
Hast soothed thine idlesse with inglorious lays,
Soon shall thy voice be lost amid the throng
Of louder minstrels in these later days:

two hundred (Greeks) who fell on Marathon? The principal barrow has recently been opened by Fauvel: few or no relics, as vases, &c., were found by the excavator. The plain of Marathon was offered to me for sale at the sum of sixteen thousand piasters, about nine hundred pounds! Alas!—"Expende—quot *libras* in duce summo—invenies!"—was the dust of Miltiades worth no more? It could scarcely have fetched less if sold by *weight*.

To such resign the strife for fading bays—
Ill may such contest now the spirit move
Which heeds nor keen reproach nor partial praise;
Since cold each kinder heart that might approve,
And none are left to please when none are left to love.

XCV.

Thou too art gone, thou loved and lovely one!
Whom youth and youth's affections bound to me;
Who did for me what none beside have done,
Nor shrank from one albeit unworthy thee.
What is my being? thou hast ceased to be!
Nor staid to welcome here thy wanderer home,
Who mourns o'er hours which we no more shall see—
Would they had never been, or were to come!
Would he had ne'er return'd to find fresh cause to roam!

XCVI.

Oh! ever loving, lovely, and beloved!
How selfish Sorrow ponders on the past,
And clings to thoughts now better far removed!
But Time shall tear thy shadow from me last.
All thou couldst have of mine, stern Death! thou hast
The parent, friend, and now the more than friend;
Ne'er yet for one thine arrows flew so fast,
And grief with grief continuing still to blend,
Hath snatch'd the little joy that life had yet to lend.

XCVII.

Then must I plunge again into the crowd,
And follow all that Peace disdains to seek?
Where Revel calls, and Laughter, vainly loud,
False to the heart, distorts the hollow cheek,
To leave the flagging spirit doubly weak!
Still o'er the features, which perforce they cheer,
To feign the pleasure or conceal the pique;
Smiles form the channel of a future tear,
Or raise the writhing lip with ill-dissembled sneer.

XCVIII.

What is the worst of woes that wait on age?
What stamps the wrinkle deeper on the brow?
To view each loved one blotted from life's page,
And be alone on earth, as I am now.
Before the Chastener humbly let me bow,
O'er hearts divided and o'er hopes destroy'd:
Roll on, vain days! full reckless may ye flow.
Since Time hath reft whate'er my soul enjoy'd,
And with the ills of Eld mine earlier years alloy'd.

CANTO THE THIRD.

"Afin que cette application vous forçât de penser à autre chose; il n'y a en vérité de remède que celui-là et le temps."—*Lettre du Roi de Prusse à D'Alembert, Sept. 7, 1776.*

I.

Is thy face like thy mother's, my fair child!
Ada! sole daughter of my house and heart?
When last I saw thy young blue eyes they smiled,
And then we parted,—not as now we part,
But with a hope.—
Awaking with a start,
The waters heave around me; and on high
The winds lift up their voices: I depart,
Whither I know not; but the hour's gone by,
When Albion's lessening shores could grieve or glad mine eye.

II.

Once more upon the waters! yet once more!
And the waves bound beneath me as a steed
That knows his rider. Welcome to their roar!
Swift be their guidance, wheresoe'er it lead!
Though the strain'd mast should quiver as a reed,
And the rent canvas fluttering strew the gale,
Still must I on; for I am as a weed,
Flung from the rock, on Ocean's foam, to sail
Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's breath prevail.

III.

In my youth's summer I did sing of One,
The wandering outlaw of his own dark mind;
Again I seize the theme, then but begun,
And bear it with me, as the gushing wind
Bears the cloud onwards: in that Tale I find
The furrows of long thought, and dried-up tears,
Which, ebbing, leave a sterile track behind,
O'er which all heavily the journeying years
Plod the last sands of life,—where not a flower appears.

IV.

Since my young days of passion—joy, or pain,
Perchance my heart and harp have lost a string,
And both may jar: it may be, that in vain
I would essay as I have sung to sing.
Yet, though a dreary strain, to this I cling,
So that it wean me from the weary dream
Of selfish grief or gladness—so it fling
Forgetfulness around me—it shall seem
To me, though to none else, a not ungrateful theme.

V.

He, who grown aged in this world of woe,
In deeds, not years, piercing the depths of life,
So that no wonder waits him; nor below
Can love, or sorrow, fame, ambition, strife,
Cut to his heart again with the keen knife

Of silent, sharp endurance: he can tell
Why thought seeks refuge in lone caves, yet rife
With airy images, and shapes which dwell
Still unimpair'd, though old, in the soul's haunted cell.

VI.

'Tis to create, and in creating live
A being more intense, that we endow
With form our fancy, gaining as we give
The life we image, even as I do now.
What am I? Nothing: but not so art thou,
Soul of my thought! with whom I traverse earth,
Invisible but gazing, as I glow
Mix'd with thy spirit, blended with thy birth,
And feeling still with thee in my crush'd feelings' dearth.

VII.

Yet must I think less wildly:—I *have* thought
Too long and darkly, till my brain became,
In its own eddy boiling and o'erwrought,
A whirling gulf of fantasy and flame:
And thus, untaught in youth my heart to tame,
My springs of life were poison'd. 'Tis too late!
Yet am I changed; though still enough the same
In strength to bear what time can not abate,
And feed on bitter fruits without accusing Fate.

VIII.

Something too much of this:—but now 'tis past,
And the spell closes with its silent seal.
Long-absent Harold reappears at last;
He of the breast which fain no more would feel,
Wrung with the wounds which kill not, but ne'er heal;
Yet Time, who changes all, had alter'd him
In soul and aspect as in age: years steal
Fire from the mind as vigor from the limb;
And life's enchanted cup but sparkles near the brim.

IX.

His had been quaff'd too quickly, and he found
The dregs were wormwood; but he fill'd again,
And from a purer fount, on holier ground,
And deem'd its spring perpetual; but in vain!
Still round him clung invisibly a chain
Which gall'd for ever, fettering though unseen,
And heavy though it clank'd not; worn with pain,
Which pined although it spoke not, and grew keen,
Entering with every step he took through many a scene.

X.

Secure in guarded coldness, he had mix'd
Again in fancied safety with his kind,
And deem'd his spirit now so firmly fix'd
And sheath'd with an invulnerable mind,

That, if no joy, no sorrow lurk'd behind;
And he, as one, might 'midst the many stand
Unheeded, searching through the crowd to find
Fit speculation; such as in strange land
He found in wonder-works of God and Nature's hand.

XI.

But who can view the ripen'd rose, nor seek
To wear it? who can curiously behold
The smoothness and the sheen of beauty's cheek,
Nor feel the heart can never all grow old?
Who can contemplate Fame through clouds unfold
The star which rises o'er her steep, nor climb?
Harold, once more within the vortex, roll'd
On with the giddy circle, chasing Time,
Yet with a nobler aim than in his youth's fond prime.

XII.

But soon he knew himself the most unfit
Of men to herd with Man; with whom he held
Little in common; untaught to submit
His thoughts to others, though his soul was quell'd
In youth by his own thoughts; still uncompell'd,
He would not yield dominion of his mind
To spirits against whom his own rebell'd;
Proud though in desolation; which could find
A life within itself, to breathe without mankind.

XIII.

Where rose the mountains, there to him were friends;
Where roll'd the ocean, thereon was his home;
Where a blue sky, and glowing clime, extends,
He had the passion and the power to roam;
The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,
Were unto him companionship; they spake
A mutual language, clearer than the tome
Of his land's tongue, which he would oft forsake
For Nature's pages glass'd by sunbeams on the lake.

XIV.

Like the Chaldean, he could watch the stars,
Till he had peopled them with beings bright
As their own beams; and earth, and earth-born jars,
And human frailties, were forgotten quite:
Could he have kept his spirit to that flight
He had been happy; but this clay will sink
Its spark immortal, envying it the light
To which it mounts, as if to break the link
That keeps us from yon heaven which wooes us to its brink.

XV.

But in Man's dwellings he became a thing
Restless and worn, and stern and wearisome,
Droop'd as a wild-born falcon with clipt wing,
To whom the boundless air alone were home:

Then came his fit again, which to o'ercome,
As eagerly the barr'd-up bird will beat
His breast and beak against his wiry dome
Till the blood tinge his plumage, so the heat
Of his impeded soul would through his bosom eat.

XVI.

Self-exiled Harold wanders forth again,
With naught of hope left, but with less of gloom;
The very knowledge that he lived in vain,
That all was over on this side the tomb,
Had made Despair a smilingness assume,
Which, though 'twere wild,—as on the plunder'd wreck
When mariners would madly meet their doom
With draughts intemperate on the sinking deck,—
Did yet inspire a cheer, which he forbore to check.

XVII.

Stop! for thy tread is on an Empire's dust!
An Earthquake's spoil is sepulchred below!
Is the spot mark'd with no colossal bust?
Nor column trophied for triumphal show?
None; but the moral's truth tells simpler so,
As the ground was before, thus let it be;—
How that red rain hath made the harvest grow!
And is this all the world has gain'd by thee,
Thou first and last of fields! king-making Victory?

XVIII.

And Harold stands upon this place of skulls,
The grave of France, the deadly Waterloo!
How in an hour the power which gave annuls
Its gifts, transferring fame as fleeting too!
In "pride of place"* here last the eagle flew,
Then tore with bloody talon the rent plain,
Pierced by the shaft of banded nations through;
Ambition's life and labors all were vain;
He wears the shatter'd links of the world's broken chain.

XIX.

Fit retribution! Gaul may champ the bit
And foam in fetters;—but is Earth more free?
Did nations combat to make *One* submit;
Or league to teach all kings true sovereignty?
What! shall reviving thraldom again be
The patch'd-up idol of enlighten'd days?
Shall we, who struck the Lion down, shall we
Pay the Wolf homage? proffering lowly gaze
And servile knees to thrones? No; *prove* before ye praise!

XX.

If not, o'er one fallen despot boast no more!
In vain fair cheeks were furrow'd with hot tears

* "In pride of place" is a term of falconry, and means the highest pitch of flight. See "Macbeth," &c.

"An eagle towering in his pride of place," &c.

For Europe's flowers long rooted up before
The trampler of her vineyards; in vain years
Of death, depopulation, bondage, fears,
Have all been borne, and broken by the accord
Of roused-up millions: all that most endears
Glory, is when the myrtle wreathes a sword
Such as Harmodius drew on Athens' tyrant lord.*

XXI.

There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gather'd then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage-bell;†
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell!

XXII.

Did ye not hear it?—No; 'twas but the wind,
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;
On with the dance! let joy be unconfin'd;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet—
But, hark! that heavy sound breaks in once more,
As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!
Arm! arm! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar!

XXIII.

Within a window'd niche of that high hall
Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain; he did hear
That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear;
And when they smiled because he deem'd it near,
His heart more truly knew that peal too well
Which stretch'd his father on a bloody bier,
And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell:
He rush'd into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.

XXIV.

Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
Blush'd at the praise of their own loveliness;
And there were sudden partings, such as press
The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
Which ne'er might be repeated: who would guess
If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,
Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could rise!

* See the famous song on Harmodius and Aristogiton. The best English translation is in "Bland's Anthology," by Mr. (now Lord Chief-Justice) Denman:—
"With myrtle my sword will I wreathe," &c.

† On the night previous to the action, it is said that a ball was given at Brussels.

XXV.

And there was mounting in hot haste: the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum
Roused up the soldier ere the morning star;
While throng'd the citizens with terror dumb,
Or whispering, with white lips—"The foe! They come! they come!"

XXVI.

And wild and high the "Cameron's gathering" rose,
The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's hills
Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon foes:
How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills
Savage and shrill! But with the breath which fills
Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers
With the fierce native daring which instils
The stirring memory of a thousand years,
And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's ears! *

XXVII.

And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,†
Dewy with nature's tear-drops, as they pass,
Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave—alas!
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
Which now beneath them, but above shall grow
In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
Of living valor, rolling on the foe,
And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and low.

XXVIII.

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,
The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,
The morn the marshalling in arms,—the day
Battle's magnificently-stern array!
The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent,
The earth is cover'd thick with other clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heap'd and pent,
Rider and horse—friend, foe—in one red burial blent!

XXIX.

Their praise is hymn'd by loftier harps than mine;
Yet one I would select from that proud throng,
Partly because they blend me with his line,
And partly that I did his sire some wrong,

* Sir Evan Cameron, and his descendant Donald, the "gentle Lochiel" of the "forty-five."

† The wood of Soignies is supposed to be a remnant of the forest of Ardennes, famous in Boiardo's "Orlando," and immortal in Shakspeare's "As you like it." It is also celebrated in Tacitus, as being the spot of successful defence by the Germans against the Roman encroachments. I have ventured to adopt the name connected with nobler associations than those of mere slaughter.

And partly that bright names will hallow song;
And his was of the bravest, and when shower'd
The death-bolts deadliest the thinn'd files along,
Even where the thickest of war's tempest lower'd,
They reach'd no nobler breast than thine, young, gallant
Howard!

XXX.

There have been tears and breaking hearts for thee,
And mine were nothing, had I such to give;
But when I stood beneath the fresh green tree,
Which living waves where thou didst cease to live,
And saw around me the wide field revive
With fruits and fertile promise, and the Spring
Come forth her work of gladness to contrive,
With all her reckless birds upon the wing,
I turn'd from all she brought to those she could not bring.*

XXXI.

I turn'd to thee, to thousands, of whom each
And one as all a ghastly gap did make
In his own kind and kindred, whom to teach
Forgetfulness were mercy for their sake;
The Archangel's trump, not glory's, must awake
Those whom they thirst for; though the sound of Fame
May for a moment soothe, it cannot slake
The fever of vain longing, and the name
So honor'd, but assumes a stronger, bitterer claim.

XXXII.

They mourn, but smile at length: and, smiling, mourn:
The tree will wither long before it fall;
The hull drives on, though mast and sail be torn;
The roof-tree sinks, but moulders on the hall
In massy hoariness; the ruin'd wall
Stands when its wind-worn battlements are gone;
The bars survive the captive they enthrall;
The day drags through though storms keep out the sun;
And thus the heart will break, yet brokenly live on:

* My guide from Mont St. Jean over the field seemed intelligent and accurate. The place where Major Howard fell was not far from two tall and solitary trees (there was a third, cut down, or shivered in the battle) which stand a few yards from each other at a pathway's side. Beneath these he died and was buried. The body has since been removed to England. A small hollow for the present marks where it lay, but will probably soon be effaced; the plough has been upon it, and the grain is. After pointing out the different spots where Picton and other gallant men had perished, the guide said, "Here Major Howard lay: I was near him when wounded." I told him my relationship, and he seemed then still more anxious to point out the particular spot and circumstances. The place is one of the most marked in the field, from the peculiarity of the two trees above mentioned. I went on horseback twice over the field, comparing it with my recollection of similar scenes. As a plain, Waterloo seems marked out for the scene of some great action, though this may be mere imagination. I have viewed with attention those of Platea, Troy, Mantinea, Leuctra, Chæronea, and Marathon, and the field around Mont St. Jean and Hougoumont appears to want little but a better cause, and that undefinable but impressive halo which the lapse of ages throws around a celebrated spot, to vie in interest with any or all of these, except, perhaps, the last mentioned.

XXXIII.

Even as a broken mirror, which the glass
In every fragment multiplies; and makes
A thousand images of one that was,
The same, and still the more, the more it breaks;
And thus the heart will do which not forsakes,
Living in shatter'd guise, and still, and cold,
And bloodless, with its sleepless sorrow aches,
Yet withers on till all without is old,
Showing no visible sign, for such things are untold.

XXXIV.

There is a very life in our despair,
Vitality of poison,—a quick root
Which feeds these deadly branches; for it were
As nothing did we die; but life will suit
Itself to Sorrow's most detested fruit,
Like to the apples on the Dead Sea's shore,*
All ashes to the taste: Did man compute
Existence by enjoyment, and count o'er
Such hours 'gainst years of life—say, would he name
threescore?

XXXV.

The Psalmist number'd out the years of man:
They are enough: and if thy tale be *true*,
Thou, who didst grudge him even that fleeting span,
More than enough, thou fatal Waterloo!
Millions of tongues record thee, and anew
Their children's lips shall echo them, and say—
"Here, where the sword united nations drew,
Our countrymen were warring on that day!"
And this is much, and all which will not pass away.

XXXVI.

There sunk the greatest, nor the worst of men,
Whose spirit antithetically mixt
One moment of the mightiest, and again
On little objects with like firmness fixt,
Extreme in all things! hadst thou been betwixt,
Thy throne had still been thine, or never been;
For daring made thy rise as fall: thou seek'st
Even now to reassume the imperial mien,
And shake again the world, the Thunderer of the scene!

XXXVII.

Conqueror and captive of the earth art thou!
She trembles at thee still, and thy wild name
Was ne'er more bruited in men's minds than now
That thou art nothing, save the jest of Fame,
Who woo'd thee once, thy vassal, and became
The flatterer of thy fierceness, till thou wert
A god unto thyself; nor less the same
To the astounded kingdoms all inert,
Who deem'd thee for a time whate'er thou didst assert.

* The (fabled) apples on the brink of the lake Asphaltes were said to be fair without, and, within, ashes. *Vide* Tacitus, Histor. lib. v. 7.

XXXVIII.

Oh, more or less than man—in high or low,
Battling with nations, flying from the field;
Now making monarchs' necks thy footstool, now
More than thy meanest soldier taught to yield:
An empire thou couldst crush, command, rebuild,
But govern not thy pettiest passion, nor,
However deeply in men's spirits skill'd,
Look through thine own, nor curb the lust of war,
Nor learn that tempted Fate will leave the loftiest star.

XXXIX.

Yet well thy soul hath brook'd the turning tide
With that untaught innate philosophy,
Which, be it wisdom, coldness, or deep pride,
Is gall and wormwood to an enemy.
When the whole host of hatred stood hard by,
To watch and mock thee shrinking, thou hast smiled
With a sedate and all-enduring eye;—
When Fortune fled her spoil'd and favorite child,
He stood unbow'd beneath the ills upon him piled.

XL.

Sager than in thy fortunes; for in them
Ambition steel'd thee on too far to show
That just habitual scorn, which could contemn
Men and their thoughts; 'twas wise to feel, not so
To wear it ever on thy lip and brow,
And spurn the instruments thou wert to use
Till they were turn'd unto thine overthrow;
'Tis but a worthless world to win or lose;
So hath it proved to thee, and all such lot who choose.

XLI.

If, like a tower upon a headlong rock,
Thou hadst been made to stand or fall alone,
Such scorn of man had help'd to brave the shock;
But men's thoughts were the steps which paved thy throne,
Their admiration thy best weapon shone;
The part of Philip's son was thine, not then
(Unless aside thy purple had been thrown)
Like stern Diogenes to mock at men;
For sceptred cynics earth were far too wide a den.*

XLII.

But quiet to quick bosoms is a hell,
And *there* hath been thy bane; there is a fire

* The great error of Napoleon, "if we have writ our annals true," was a continued obtrusion on mankind of his want of all community of feeling for or with them; perhaps more offensive to human vanity than the active cruelty of more trembling and suspicious tyranny. Such were his speeches to public assemblies as well as individuals; and the single expression which he is said to have used on returning to Paris after the Russian winter had destroyed his army, rubbing his hands over a fire, "This is pleasanter than Moscow," would probably alienate more favor from his cause than the destruction and reverses which led to the remark.

And motion of the soul which will not dwell
In its own narrow being, but aspire
Beyond the fitting medium of desire;
And, but once kindled, quenchless evermore,
Preys upon high adventure, nor can tire
Of aught but rest; a fever at the core,
Fatal to him who bears, to all who ever bore.

XLIII.

This makes the madmen who have made men mad
By their contagion! Conquerors and Kings,
Founders of sects and systems, to whom add
Sophists, Bards, Statesmen, all unquiet things
Which stir too strongly the soul's secret springs,
And are themselves the fools to those they fool;
Envied, yet how unenviable! what stings
Are theirs! One breast laid open were a school
Which would unteach mankind the lust to shine or rule:

XLIV.

Their breath is agitation, and their life
A storm whereon they ride, to sink at last,
And yet so nursed and bigoted to strife,
That should their days, surviving perils past,
Melt to calm twilight, they feel overcast
With sorrow and supineness, and so die;
Even as a flame unfed, which runs to waste
With its own flickering, or a sword laid by,
Which eats into itself, and rusts ingloriously.

XLV.

He who ascends to mountain-tops, shall find
The loftiest peaks most wrapt in clouds and snow;
He who surpasses or subdues mankind,
Must look down on the hate of those below.
Though high *above* the sun of glory glow,
And far *beneath* the earth and ocean spread,
Round him are icy rocks, and loudly blow
Contending tempests on his naked head,
And thus reward the toils which to those summits led.

XLVI.

Away with these! true Wisdom's world will be
Within its own creation, or in thine,
Maternal Nature! for who teems like thee,
Thus on the banks of thy majestic Rhine?
There Harold gazes on a work divine,
A blending of all beauties; streams and dells,
Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, cornfield, mountain, vine,
And chiefless castles breathing stern farewells
From gray but leafy walls, where Ruin greenly dwells.

XLVII.

And there they stand, as stands a lofty mind,
Worn, but unstooping to the baser crowd,
All tenantless, save to the crannying wind,
Or holding dark communion with the cloud.

There was a day when they were young and proud,
Banners on high, and battles pass'd below;
But they who fought are in a bloody shroud,
And those which waved are shredless dust ere now,
And the bleak battlements shall bear no future blow.

XLVIII.

Beneath these battlements, within those walls,
Power dwelt amidst her passions; in proud state
Each robber chief upheld his armed halls,
Doing his evil will, nor less elate
Than mightier heroes of a longer date.
What want these outlaws conquerors should have?*
But History's purchased page to call them great?
A wider space, an ornamented grave?
Their hopes were not less warm, their souls were full as brave.

XLIX.

In their baronial feuds and single fields,
What deeds of prowess unrecorded died!
And Love, which lent a blazon to their shields,
With emblems well devised by amorous pride,
Through all the mail of iron hearts would glide;
But still their flame was fierceness, and drew on
Keen contest and destruction near allied,
And many a tower for some fair mischief won,
Saw the discolor'd Rhine beneath its ruin run.

L.

But Thou, exulting and abounding river!
Making thy waves a blessing as they flow
Through banks whose beauty would endure for ever,
Could man but leave thy bright creation so,
Nor its fair promise from the surface mow
With the sharp scythe of conflict,—then to see
Thy valley of sweet waters, were to know
Earth paved like Heaven; and to seem such to me
Even now what wants thy stream?—that it should Lethe be.

LI.

A thousand battles have assail'd thy banks,
But these and half their fame have pass'd away,
And Slaughter heap'd on high his weltering ranks:
Their very graves are gone, and what are they?
Thy tide wash'd down the blood of yesterday,
And all was stainless, and on thy clear stream
Glass'd with its dancing light the sunny ray;
But o'er the blacken'd memory's blighting dream
Thy waves would vainly roll, all sweeping as they seem.

LII.

Thus Harold inly said, and pass'd along,
Yet not insensibly to all which here
Awoke the jocund birds to early song
In glens which might have made even exile dear:

* "What wants that knave that a king should have?" was King James's question on meeting Johnny Armstrong and his followers in full accoutrements.—See the Ballad.

"Beneath these battlements, within those walls,
Power dwelt amidst her passions."

Page 610.

Though on his brow were graven lines austere,
And tranquil sternness which had ta'en the place
Of feelings fierier far but less severe,
Joy was not always absent from his face,
But o'er it in such scenes would steal with transient trace.

LIII.

Nor was all love shut from him though his days
Of passion had consumed themselves to dust.
It is in vain that we would coldly gaze
On such as smile upon us; the heart must
Leap kindly back to kindness, though disgust
Hath wean'd it from all worldlings: thus he felt,
For there was soft remembrance, and sweet trust
In one fond breast, to which his own would melt,
And in its tenderer hour on that his bosom dwelt.

LIV.

And he had learn'd to love,—I know not why,
For this in such as him seems strange of mood,—
The helpless looks of blooming infancy,
Even in its earliest nurture; what subdued,
To change like this, a mind so far imbued
With scorn of man, it little boots to know;
But thus it was; and though in solitude
Small power the nipp'd affections have to grow,
In him this glow'd when all beside had ceased to glow.

LV.

And there was one soft breast, as hath been said,
Which unto his was bound by stronger ties
Than the church links withal: and, though unwed,
That love was pure, and far above disguise,
Had stood the test of mortal enmities
Still undivided, and cemented more
By peril, dreaded most in female eyes;
But this was firm, and from a foreign shore
Well to that heart might his these absent greetings pour!

1.

The castled crag of Drachenfels *
Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine,
Whose breast of waters broadly swells
Between the banks which bear the vine,
And hills all rich with blossom'd trees,
And fields which promise corn and wine,
And scatter'd cities crowning these,
Whose far white walls along them shine,
Have strew'd a scene, which I should see
With double joy, wert thou with me.

* The castle of Drachenfels stands on the highest summit of "The Seven Mountains," over the Rhine banks; it is in ruins, and connected with some singular traditions. It is the first in view on the road from Bonn, but on the opposite side of the river. On this bank, nearly facing it, are the remains of another, called the Jew's Castle, and a large cross commemorative of the murder of a chief by his brother. The number of castles and cities along the course of the Rhine on both sides is very great, and their situations remarkably beautiful.

2.

And peasant girls, with deep-blue eyes,
And hands which offer early flowers,
Walk smiling o'er this paradise;
Above, the frequent feudal towers
Through green leaves lift their walls of gray,
And many a rock which steeply lowers,
And noble arch in proud decay,
Look o'er this vale of vintage-bowers;
But one thing want these banks of Rhine,—
Thy gentle hand to clasp in mine!

3.

I send the lilies given to me;
Though long before thy hand they touch,
I know that they must wither'd be,
But yet reject them not as such;
For I have cherish'd them as dear,
Because they yet may meet thine eye,
And guide thy soul to mine even here,
When thou behold'st them drooping nigh,
And know'st them gather'd by the Rhine,
And offer'd from my heart to thine!

4.

The river nobly foams and flows,
The charm of this enchanted ground,
And all its thousand turns disclose
Some fresher beauty varying round:
The haughtiest breast its wish might bound
Through life to dwell delighted here;
Nor could on earth a spot be found
To nature and to me so dear,
Could thy dear eyes in following mine
Still sweeten more these banks of Rhine!

LVI.

By Coblentz, on a rise of gentle ground,
There is a small and simple pyramid,
Crowning the summit of the verdant mound;
Beneath its base are heroes' ashes hid,
Our enemy's—but let not that forbid
Honor to Marceau! o'er whose early tomb
Tears, big tears, gush'd from the rough soldier's lid,
Lamenting and yet envying such a doom,
Falling for France, whose rights he battled to resume.

LVII.

Brief, brave, and glorious was his young career,—
His mourners were two hosts, his friends and foes,
And fitly may the stranger lingering here
Pray for his gallant spirit's bright repose;
For he was Freedom's champion, one of those,
The few in number, who had not o'erstept
The charter to chastise which she bestows

On such as wield her weapons; he had kept
The whiteness of his soul, and thus men o'er him wept.*

LVIII.

Here Ehrenbreitstein,† with her shatter'd wall
Black with the miner's blast, upon her height
Yet shows of what she was, when shell and ball
Rebounding idly on her strength did light:
A tower of victory, from whence the flight
Of baffled foes was watch'd along the plain:
But Peace destroy'd what War could never blight,
And laid those proud roofs bare to Summer's rain—
On which the iron shower for years had pour'd in vain.

LIX.

Adieu to thee, fair Rhine! How long delighted
The stranger fain would linger on his way!
Thine is a scene alike where souls united
Or lonely Contemplation thus might stray;
And could the ceaseless vultures cease to prey
On self-condemning bosoms, it were here,
Where Nature, nor too sombre nor too gay,
Wild but not rude, awful yet not austere,
Is to the mellow Earth as Autumn to the year.

LX.

Adieu to thee again! a vain adieu!
There can be no farewell to scene like thine,
The mind is color'd by thy every hue;
And if reluctantly the eyes resign
Their cherish'd gaze upon thee, lovely Rhine!
'Tis with the thankful glance of parting praise;
More mighty spots may rise—more glaring shine,
But none unite in one attaching maze
The brilliant, fair, and soft,—the glories of old days.

* The monument of the young and lamented General Marceau (killed by a rifle-ball at Altenkirchen, on the last day of the fourth year of the French republic) still remains as described. The inscriptions on his monument are rather too long, and not required—his name was enough. France adored, and her enemies admired; both wept over him. His funeral was attended by the generals and detachments from both armies. In the same grave General Hoche is interred, a gallant man also in every sense of the word; but though he distinguished himself greatly in battle, *he* had not the good fortune to die there: his death was attended by suspicions of poison. A separate monument (not over his body, which is buried by Marceau's) is raised for him near Andernach, opposite to which one of his most memorable exploits was performed, in throwing a bridge to an island on the Rhine. The shape and style are different from that of Marceau, and the inscription more simple and pleasing:—"The Army of the Sambre and Meuse to its Commander-in-Chief, Hoche." This is all, and as it should be. Hoche was esteemed among the first of France's earlier generals, before Buonaparte monopolized her triumphs. He was the destined commander of the invading army of Ireland.

† Ehrenbreitstein, *i. e.*, "the broad stone of honor," one of the strongest fortresses in Europe, was dismantled and blown up by the French at the truce of Leoben. It had been, and could only be, reduced by famine or treachery. It yielded to the former, aided by surprise. After having seen the fortifications of Gibraltar and Malta, it did not much strike by comparison; but the situation is commanding. General Marceau besieged it in vain for some time, and I slept in a room where I was shown a window at which he is said to have been standing observing the progress of the siege by moonlight when a ball struck immediately below it.

LXI.

The negligently grand, the fruitful bloom
Of coming ripeness, the white city's sheen,
The rolling stream, the precipice's gloom,
The forest's growth, and Gothic walls between,
The wild rocks shaped as they had turrets been
In mockery of man's art; and these withal
A race of faces happy as the scene,
Whose fertile bounties here extend to all,
Still springing o'er thy banks, though Empires near them fall.

LXII.

But these recede. Above me are the Alps,
The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls
Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy scalps,
And throned Eternity in icy halls
Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls
The avalanche—the thunderbolt of snow!
All that expands the spirit, yet appalls,
Gather around these summits, as to show
How Earth may pierce to Heaven, yet leave vain man below.

LXIII.

But ere these matchless heights I dare to scan,
There is a spot should not be pass'd in vain,—
Morat! the proud, the patriot field! where man
May gaze on ghastly trophies of the slain,
Nor blush for those who conquer'd on that plain;
Here Burgundy bequeath'd his tombless host,
A bony heap, through ages to remain,
Themselves their monument; the Stygian coast
Unsepulchred they roam'd, and shriek'd each wandering ghost.*

LXIV.

While Waterloo with Cannæ's carnage vies,
Morat and Marathon twin names shall stand;
They were true Glory's stainless victories,
Won by the unambitious heart and hand
Of a proud, brotherly, and civic band,
All unbought champions in no princely cause
Of vice-entail'd Corruption; they no land
Doom'd to bewail the blasphemy of laws
Making kings' rights divine, by some Draconic clause.

* The chapel is destroyed, and the pyramid of bones diminished to a small number by the Burgundian legion in the service of France, who anxiously effaced this record of their ancestors' less successful invasions. A few still remain, notwithstanding the pains taken by the Burgundians for ages (all who passed that way removing a bone to their own country), and the less justifiable larcenies of the Swiss postilions, who carried them off to sell for knife-handles—a purpose for which the whiteness imbibed by the bleaching of years had rendered them in great request.

Of these relics I ventured to bring away as much as may have made a quarter of a hero, for which the sole excuse is, that if I had not, the next passer-by might have perverted them to worse uses than the careful preservation which I intend for them.

LXV.

By a lone wall a lonelier column rears
A gray and grief-worn aspect of old days;
'Tis the last remnant of the wreck of years,
And looks as with the wild bewilder'd gaze
Of one to stone converted by amaze,
Yet still with consciousness; and there it stands
Making a marvel that it not decays,
When the coeval pride of human hands,
Levell'd Aventicum, hath strew'd her subject lands.*

LXVI.

And there—oh! sweet and sacred be the name!—
Julia—the daughter, the devoted—gave
Her youth to Heaven; her heart, beneath a claim
Nearest to Heaven's, broke o'er a father's grave.
Justice is sworn 'gainst tears, and hers would crave
The life she lived in; but the judge was just,
And then she died on him she could not save.
Their tomb was simple, and without a bust,
And held within their urn one mind, one heart, one dust.†

LXVII.

But these are deeds which should not pass away,
And names that must not wither, though the earth
Forgets her empires with a just decay,
The enslavers and the enslaved, their death and birth;
The high, the mountain-majesty of worth,
Should be, and shall, survivor of its woe,
And from its immortality look forth
In the sun's face, like yonder Alpine snow,‡
Imperishably pure beyond all things below.

LXVIII.

Lake Leman wooes me with its crystal face,§
The mirror where the stars and mountains view

* Aventicum, near Morat, was the Roman capital of Helvetia, where Avenches now stands.

† Julia Alpinula, a young Aventian priestess, died soon after a vain endeavour to save her father, condemned to death as a traitor by Aulus Cæcina. Her epitaph was discovered many years ago. It is thus:—"Julia Alpinula: Hic jacco. Infelicis patris infelix proles. Deæ Aventiæ Sacerdos. Exorare patris necem non potui: Male mori in fatis ille erat. Vixi annos XXIII." I know of no human composition so affecting as this, nor a history of deeper interest. These are the names and actions which ought not to perish, and to which we turn with a true and healthy tenderness, from the wretched and glittering detail of a confused mass of conquests and battles, with which the mind is roused for a time to a false and feverish sympathy, from whence it recurs at length with all the nausea consequent on such intoxication.

‡ This is written in the eye of Mont Blanc (June 3d, 1816,) which even at this distance dazzles mine.—(July 20th.) I this day observed for some time the distinct reflection of Mont Blanc and Mont Argentiere in the calm of the lake, which I was crossing in my boat. The distance of these mountains from their mirror is sixty miles.

§ The following touching stanza forms part of the beautiful lines which about this time the poet addressed to his sister:—

"I did remind thee of our own dear lake,
By the old hall which may be mine no more.
Leman's is fair; but think not I forsake
The sweet remembrance of a dearer shore:
Sad havoc Time must with my memory make
Ere *that* or *thou* can fade these eyes before;
Though, like all things which I have loved, they are
Resign'd for ever, or divided far."

The stillness of their aspect in each trace
Its clear depth yields of their far height and hue:
There is too much of man here, to look through
With a fit mind the might which I behold;
But soon in me shall Loneliness renew
Thoughts hid, but not less cherish'd than of old,
Ere mingling with the herd had penn'd me in their fold.

LXIX.

To fly from, need not be to hate, mankind:
All are not fit with them to stir and toil,
Nor is it discontent to keep the mind
Deep in its fountain, lest it overboil
In one hot throng, where we become the spoil
Of our infection, till too late and long
We may deplore and struggle with the coil,
In wretched interchange of wrong for wrong
'Midst a contentious world, striving where none are strong.

LXX.

There, in a moment, we may plunge our years
In fatal penitence, and in the blight
Of our own soul, turn all our blood to tears,
And color things to come with hues of Night;
The race of life becomes a hopeless flight
To those that walk in darkness: on the sea,
The boldest steer but where their ports invite,
But there are wanderers o'er Eternity
Whose bark drives on and on, and anchor'd ne'er shall be.

LXXI.

Is it not better, then, to be alone,
And love Earth only for its earthly sake?
By the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone,*
Or the pure bosom of its nursing lake,
Which feeds it as a mother who doth make
A fair but froward infant her own care,
Kissing its cries away as these awake!—
Is it not better thus our lives to wear,
Than join the crushing crowd, doom'd to inflict or bear?

LXXII.

I live not in myself, but I become
Portion of that around me; and to me
High mountains are a feeling, but the hum
Of human cities torture: I can see
Nothing to loathe in nature, save to be
A link reluctant in a fleshly chain,
Class'd among creatures, when the soul can flee,
And with the sky, the peak, the heaving plain
Of ocean, or the stars, mingle, and not in vain.

* The color of the Rhone at Geneva is blue, to a depth of tint which I have never seen equalled in water, salt or fresh, except in the Mediterranean and Archipelago.

LXXIII.

And thus I am absorb'd, and this is life:
I look upon the peopled desert past,
As on a place of agony and strife,
Where, for some sin, to Sorrow I was cast,
To act and suffer, but remount at last
With a fresh pinion; which I feel to spring,
Though young, yet waxing vigorous, as the blast
Which it would cope with, on delighted wing,
Spurning the clay-cold bonds which round our being cling.

LXXIV.

And when, at length, the mind shall be all free
From what it hates in this degraded form,
Reft of its carnal life, save what shall be
Existent happier in the fly and worm,—
When elements to elements conform,
And dust is as it should be, shall I not
Feel all I see, less dazzling, but more warm?
The bodiless thought? the Spirit of each spot?
Of which, even now, I share at times the immortal lot?

LXXV.

Are not the mountains, waves, and skies, a part
Of me and of my soul, as I of them?
Is not the love of these deep in my heart
With a pure passion? Should I not contemn
All objects, if compared with these? and stem
A tide of suffering, rather than forego
Such feelings for the hard and worldly phlegm
Of those whose eyes are only turn'd below,
Gazing upon the ground, with thoughts which dare not glow?

LXXVI.

But this is not my theme; and I return
To that which is immediate, and require
Those who find contemplation in the urn,
To look on One, whose dust was once all fire,
A native of the land where I respire
The clear air for a while—a passing guest,
Where he became a being,—whose desire
Was to be glorious; 'twas a foolish quest,
The which to gain and keep, he sacrificed all rest.

LXXVII.

Here the self-torturing sophist, wild Rousseau,
The apostle of affliction, he who threw
Enchantment over passion, and from woe
Wrung overwhelming eloquence, first drew
The breath which made him wretched; yet he knew
How to make madness beautiful, and cast
O'er erring deeds and thoughts a heavenly hue
Of words, like sunbeams, dazzling as they past
The eyes, which o'er them shed tears feelingly and fast.

LXXVIII.

His love was passion's essence—as a tree
On fire by lightning; with ethereal flame
Kindled he was, and blasted; for to be
Thus, and enamor'd, were in him the same.
But his was not the love of living dame,
Nor of the dead who rise upon our dreams,
But of ideal beauty, which became
In him existence, and o'erflowing teems
Along his burning page, distemper'd though it seems.

LXXIX.

This breathed itself to life in Julie, *this*
Invested her with all that 's wild and sweet;
This hallow'd, too, the memorable kiss *
Which every morn his fever'd lip would greet,
From hers, who but with friendship his would meet;
But to that gentle touch, through brain and breast
Flash'd the thrill'd spirit's love-devouring heat:
In that absorbing sigh perchance more blest
Than vulgar minds may be with all they seek possest.

LXXX.

His life was one long war with self-sought foes,
Or friends by him self-banish'd; for his mind
Had grown Suspicion's sanctuary, and chose
For its own cruel sacrifice the kind,
'Gainst whom he raged with fury strange and blind,
But he was frenzied,—wherefore, who may know?
Since cause might be which skill could never find;
But he was frenzied by disease or woe
To that worst pitch of all, which wears a reasoning show.

LXXXI.

For then he was inspired, and from him came
As from the Pythian's mystic cave of yore,
Those oracles which set the world in flame,
Nor ceased to burn till kingdoms were no more:
Did he not this for France? which lay before
Bow'd to the inborn tyranny of years?
Broken and trembling to the yoke she bore,
Till by the voice of him and his compeers,
Roused up to too much wrath, which follows o'ergrown fears?

LXXXII.

They made themselves a fearful monument!
The wreck of old opinions—things which grew,
Breathed from the birth of time: the veil they rent,
And what behind it lay, all earth shall view.

* This refers to the account in his "Confessions" of his passion for the Comtesse d'Houdetot (the mistress of St. Lambert), and his long walk every morning, for the sake of the single kiss which was the common salutation of French acquaintance. Rousseau's description of his feelings on this occasion may be considered as the most passionate, yet not impure, description and expression of love that ever kindled into words; which, after all, must be felt, from their very force, to be inadequate to the delineation. A painting can give no sufficient idea of the ocean.

But good with ill they also overthrew,
Leaving but ruins, wherewith to rebuild
Upon the same foundation, and renew
Dungeons and thrones, which the same hour refill'd,
As heretofore, because ambition was self-will'd.

LXXXIII.

But this will not endure, nor be endured!
Mankind have felt their strength, and made it felt.
They might have used it better, but, allured
By their new vigor, sternly have they dealt
On one another; pity ceased to melt
With her once natural charities. But they,
Who in oppression's darkness caved had dwelt,
They were not eagles, nourish'd with the day;
What marvel then, at times, if they mistook their prey?

LXXXIV.

What deep wounds ever closed without a scar?
The heart's bleed longest, and but heal to wear
That which disfigures it; and they who war
With their own hopes, and have been vanquish'd, bear
Silence, but not submission: in his lair
Fix'd Passion holds his breath, until the hour
Which shall atone for years; none need despair:
It came, it cometh, and will come,—the power
To punish or forgive—in *one* we shall be slower.

LXXXV.

Clear, placid Leman! thy contrasted lake,
With the wild world I dwelt in, is a thing
Which warns me, with its stillness to forsake
Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
To waft me from distraction; once I loved
Torn ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet as if a Sister's voice reproved,
That I with stern delights should e'er have been so moved.

LXXXVI.

It is the hush of night, and all between
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,
Mellow'd and mingling, yet distinctly seen,
Save darken'd Jura, whose capt heights appear
Precipitously steep; and drawing near,
There breathes a living fragrance from the shore,
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on the ear
Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol more;

LXXXVII.

He is an evening reveller, who makes
His life an infancy, and sings his fill;
At intervals, some bird from out the brakes
Starts into voice a moment, then is still.

There seems a floating whisper on the hill;
But that is fancy, for the starlight dews
All silently their tears of love instil,
Weeping themselves away, till they infuse
Deep into Nature's breast the spirit of her hues.

LXXXVIII.

Ye stars! which are the poetry of heaven,
If in your bright leaves we would read the fate
Of men and empires,—'tis to be forgiven,
That in our aspirations to be great,
Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,
And claim a kindred with you; for ye are
A beauty, and a mystery, and create
In us such love and reverence from afar,
That fortune, fame, power, life, have named themselves a star.

LXXXIX.

All heaven and earth are still—though not in sleep,
But breathless, as we grow when feeling most;
And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep:—
All heaven and earth are still: From the high host
Of stars, to the lull'd lake and mountain-coast,
All is concentred in a life intense,
Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,
But hath a part of being, and a sense
Of that which is of all Creator and defence.

XC.

Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt
In solitude, where we are *least* alone;
A truth, which through our being then doth melt,
And purifies from self: it is a tone,
The soul and source of music, which makes known
Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm,
Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone,
Binding all things with beauty;—'twould disarm
The spectre Death, had he substantial power to harm.

XCI.

Not vainly did the early Persian make
His altar the high places and the peak
Of earth-o'ergazing mountains,* and thus take
A fit and unwall'd temple, there to seek
The Spirit, in whose honor shrines are weak,
Upreard of human hands. Come, and compare
Columns and idol-dwellings, Goth or Greek,
With Nature's realms of worship, earth and air,
Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy prayer!

* It is to be recollected that the most beautiful and impressive doctrines of the Divine Founder of Christianity were delivered, not in the *Temple*, but on the *Mount*. To waive the question of devotion, and turn to human eloquence,—the most effectual and splendid specimens were not pronounced within walls. Demosthenes addressed the public and popular assemblies. Cicero spoke in the Forum. That this added to their effect on the mind of both orator and hearers, may be conceived from the difference between what we read of the emotions then and there produced, and those we ourselves experience in the perusal in

XCII.

The sky is changed!—and such a change! O night,
And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in woman! Far along,
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among
Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

XCIII.

And this is in the night:—Most glorious night!
Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be
A sharer in thy fierce and fair delight,—
A portion of the tempest and of thee!*
How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,
And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!
And now again 'tis black,—and now, the glee
Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth,
As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.

XCIV.

Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his way between
Heights which appear as lovers who have parted
In hate, whose mining depths so intervene
That they can meet no more, though broken-hearted;
Though in their souls, which thus each other thwarted,
Love was the very root of the fond rage
Which blighted their life's bloom, and then departed:—
Itself expired, but leaving them an age
Of years all winters,—war within themselves to wage.

the closet. It is one thing to read the "Iliad" at Sigæum and on the tumuli, or by the springs, with Mount Ida above, and the plain, and rivers, and Archipelago around you; and another to trim your taper over it in a snug library—*this* I know. Were the early and rapid progress of what is called Methodism to be attributed to any cause beyond the enthusiasm excited by its vehement faith and doctrines (the truth or error of which I presume neither to canvass nor to question), I should venture to ascribe it to the practice of preaching in the *fields*, and the unstudied and extemporaneous effusions of its teachers. The Mussulmans, whose erroneous devotion (at least in the lower orders) is most sincere, and therefore impressive, are accustomed to repeat their prescribed orisons and prayers, wherever they may be, at the stated hours—of course, frequently in the open air, kneeling upon a light mat (which they carry for the purpose of a bed or cushion, as required). The ceremony lasts some minutes, during which they are totally absorbed, and only living in their supplication: nothing can disturb them. On me the simple and entire sincerity of these men, and the spirit which appeared to be within and upon them, made a far greater impression than any general rite which was ever performed in places of worship, of which I have seen those of almost every persuasion under the sun—including most of our own sectaries, and the Greek, the Catholic, the Armenian, the Lutheran, the Jewish, and the Mohammedan. Many of the negroes, of whom there are numbers in the Turkish empire, are idolaters, and have free exercise of their belief and its rites. Some of these I had a distant view of at Patras; and, from what I could make out of them, they appeared to be of a truly pagan description, and not very agreeable to a spectator.

* The thunder-storm to which these lines refer occurred on the 13th of June, 1816, at midnight. I have seen, among the Acroceraunian mountains of Chimari, several more terrible, but none more beautiful.

XCV.

Now, where the quick Rhone thus hath cleft his way,
The mightiest of the storms hath ta'en his stand:
For here, not one, but many, make their play,
And fling their thunderbolts from hand to hand,
Flashing and cast around: of all the band,
The brightest through these parted hills hath fork'd
His lightnings,—as if he did understand
That in such gaps as desolation work'd,
There the hot shaft should blast whatever therein lurk'd.

XCVI.

Sky, mountains, river, winds, lake, lightnings! ye!
With night, and clouds, and thunder, and a soul
To make these felt and feeling, well may be
Things that have made me watchful; the far roll
Of your departing voices, is the knoll
Of what in me is sleepless,—if I rest.
But where of ye, O tempests! is the goal?
Are ye like those within the human breast?
Or do ye find, at length, like eagles, some high nest?

XCVII.

Could I embody and unbosom now
That which is most within me,—could I wreak
My thoughts upon expression, and thus throw
Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings, strong or weak,
All that I would have sought, and all I seek,
Bear, know, feel, and yet breathe—into *one* word,
And that one word were Lightning, I would speak;
But as it is, I live and die unheard,
With a most voiceless thought, sheathing it as a sword.

XCVIII.

The morn is up again, the dewy morn,
With breath all incense, and with cheek all bloom,
Laughing the clouds away with playful scorn,
And living as if earth contain'd no tomb,—
And glowing into day: we may resume
The march of our existence: and thus I,
Still on thy shores, fair Leman! may find room
And food for meditation, nor pass by
Much, that may give us pause, if ponder'd fittingly.

XCIX.

Clarens! sweet Clarens! birthplace of deep Love!
Thine air is the young breath of passionate thought;
Thy trees take root in love; the snows above
The very Glaciers have his colors caught,
And sunset into rose-hues sees them wrought
By rays which sleep there lovingly: the rocks,
The permanent crags, tell here of Love, who sought
In them a refuge from the worldly shocks,
Which stir and sting the soul with hope that wooes, then mocks.

C.

Clarens! by heavenly feet thy paths are trod,—
Undying Love's who here ascends a throne
To which the steps are mountains; where the god
Is a pervading life and light,—so shown
Not on those summits solely, nor alone
In the still cave and forest; o'er the flower
His eye is sparkling, and his breath hath blown,
His soft and summer breath, whose tender power
Passes the strength of storms in their most desolate hour.

CI.

All things are here of *him;* from the black pines,
Which are his shade on high, and the loud roar
Of torrents, where he listeneth, to the vines
Which slope his green path downward to the shore,
Where the bow'd waters meet him, and adore,
Kissing his feet with murmurs; and the wood,
The covert of old trees, with trunks all hoar,
But light leaves, young as joy, stands where it stood,
Offering to him, and his, a populous solitude.

CII.

A populous solitude of bees and birds,
And fairy-form'd and many-color'd things,
Who worship him with notes more sweet than words,
And innocently open their glad wings
Fearless and full of life: the gush of springs,
And fall of lofty fountains, and the bend
Of stirring branches, and the bud which brings
The swiftest thought of beauty, here extend,
Mingling, and made by Love, unto one mighty end.

CIII.

He who hath loved not, here would learn that lore,
And make his heart a spirit; he who knows
That tender mystery, will love the more,
For this is Love's recess, where vain men's woes,
And the world's waste, have driven him far from those,
For 'tis his nature to advance or die:
He stands not still, but or decays, or grows
Into a boundless blessing, which may vie
With the immortal lights, in its eternity!

CIV.

'Twas not for fiction chose Rousseau this spot,
Peopling it with affections; but he found
It was the scene which passion must allot
To the mind's purified beings; 'twas the ground
Where early Love his Psyche's zone unbound,
And hallow'd it with loveliness: 'tis lone,
And wonderful, and deep, and hath a sound,
And sense, and sight of sweetness; here the Rhone
Hath spread himself a couch, the Alps have rear'd a throne.

CV.

Lausanne! and Ferney! ye have been the abodes
Of names which unto you bequeath'd a name; *
Mortals, who sought and found, by dangerous roads,
A path to perpetuity of fame:
They were gigantic minds, and their steep aim
Was, Titan-like, on daring doubts to pile
Thoughts which should call down thunder, and the flame
Of Heaven, again assail'd, if Heaven the while
On man and man's research could deign do more than smile.

CVI.

The one was fire and fickleness, a child,
Most mutable in wishes, but in mind
A wit as various,—gay—grave—sage—or wild—
Historian, bard, philosopher, combined;
He multiplied himself among mankind,
The Proteus of their talents: But his own
Breathed most in ridicule,—which, as the wind,
Blew where it listed, laying all things prone,—
Now to o'erthrow a fool, and now to shake a throne.

CVII.

The other, deep and slow, exhausting thought,
And hiving wisdom with each studious year,
In meditation dwelt, with learning wrought,
And shaped his weapon with an edge severe,
Sapping a solemn creed with solemn sneer;
The lord of irony,—that master-spell,
Which stung his foes to wrath, which grew from fear,
And doom'd him to the zealot's ready hell,
Which answers to all doubts so eloquently well.

CVIII.

Yet, peace be with their ashes,—for by them,
If merited, the penalty is paid;
It is not ours to judge,—far less condemn;
The hour must come when such things shall be made
Known unto all,—or hope and dread allay'd
By slumber, on one pillow,—in the dust,
Which, thus much we are sure, must lie decay'd;
And, when it shall revive, as is our trust,
'Twill be to be forgiven, or suffer what is just.

CIX.

But let me quit man's works, again to read
His Maker's, spread around me, and suspend
This page, which from my reveries I feed,
Until it seems prolonging without end.
The clouds above me to the white Alps tend,
And I must pierce them, and survey whate'er
May be permitted, as my steps I bend
To their most great and growing region, where
The earth to her embrace compels the powers of air.

* Voltaire and Gibbon.

CX.

Italia! too, Italia! looking on thee
Full flashes on the soul the light of ages,
Since the fierce Carthaginian almost won thee,
To the last halo of the chiefs and sages,
Who glorify thy consecrated pages;
Thou wert the throne and grave of empires; still,
The fount at which the panting mind assuages
Her thirst for knowledge, quaffing there her fill,
Flows from the eternal source of Rome's imperial hill.

CXI.

Thus far have I proceeded in a theme
Renew'd with no kind auspices:—to feel
We are not what we have been, and to deem
We are not what we should be,—and to steel
The heart against itself; and to conceal,
With a proud caution, love, or hate, or aught,—
Passion or feeling, purpose, grief, or zeal,—
Which is the tyrant spirit of our thought,
Is a stern task of soul:—No matter,—it is taught.

CXII.

And for these words, thus woven into song,
It may be that they are a harmless wile,—
The coloring of the scenes which fleet along,
Which I would seize, in passing, to beguile
My breast, or that of others, for a while.
Fame is the thirst of youth,—but I am not
So young as to regard men's frown or smile,
As loss or guerdon of a glorious lot;
I stood and stand alone,—remember'd or forgot.

CXIII.

I have not loved the world, nor the world me;
I have not flatter'd its rank breath, nor bow'd
To its idolatries a patient knee,—
Nor coin'd my cheek to smiles,—nor cried aloud
In worship of an echo; in the crowd
They could not deem me one of such; I stood
Among them, but not of them; in a shroud
Of thoughts which were not their thoughts, and still could,
Had I not filed * my mind, which thus itself subdued.

CXIV.

I have not loved the world, nor the world me,—
But let us part fair foes; I do believe,
Though I have found them not, that there may be
Words which are things,—hopes which will not deceive,
And virtues which are merciful, nor weave
Snares for the failing: I would also deem
O'er others' griefs that some sincerely grieve;
That two, or one, are almost what they seem,—
That goodness is no name, and happiness no dream.

* —"If it be thus,
For Banquo's issue have I *filed* my mind."—*Macbeth.*

CXV.

My daughter! with thy name this song begun—
My daughter! with thy name thus much shall end—
I see thee not,—I hear thee not,—but none
Can be so wrapt in thee; thou art the friend
To whom the shadows of far years extend:
Albeit my brow thou never shouldst behold,
My voice shall with thy future visions blend,
And reach into thy heart,—when mine is cold,—
A token and a tone, even from thy father's mould.

CXVI.

To aid thy mind's development,—to watch
Thy dawn of little joys,—to sit and see
Almost thy very growth,—to view thee catch
Knowledge of objects,—wonders yet to thee!
To hold thee lightly on a gentle knee,
And print on thy soft cheek a parent's kiss,—
This, it should seem, was not reserved for me;
Yet this was in my nature:—as it is,
I know not what is there, yet something like to this.

CXVII.

Yet, though dull Hate as duty should be taught,
I know that thou wilt love me; though my name
Should be shut from thee, as a spell still fraught
With desolation,—and a broken claim:
Though the grave closed between us,—'twere the same,
I know that thou wilt love me; though to drain
My blood from out thy being were an aim,
And an attainment,—all would be in vain,—
Still thou wouldst love me, still that more than life retain.

CXVIII.

The child of love,—though born in bitterness,
And nurtured in convulsion. Of thy sire
These were the elements,—and thine no less.
As yet such are around thee,—but thy fire
Shall be more temper'd, and thy hope far higher.
Sweet be thy cradled slumbers! O'er the sea,
And from the mountains where I now respire,
Fain would I waft such blessing upon thee,
As, with a sigh, I deem thou mightst have been to me!

CANTO THE FOURTH.

TO JOHN HOBHOUSE, ESQ., A.M., F.R.S., ETC.

MY DEAR HOBHOUSE: After an interval of eight years between the composition of the first and last cantos of Childe Harold, the conclusion of the poem is about to be submitted to the public. In parting with so old a friend, it is not extraordinary that I should recur to one still older and better,—to one who has beheld the birth and death of the other, and to whom I am far more indebted for the social advantages of an enlightened friendship, than—though not ungrateful

—I can, or could be, to Childe Harold, for any public favor reflected through the poem on the poet,—to one, whom I have known long, and accompanied far, whom I have found wakeful over my sickness and kind in my sorrow, glad in my prosperity and firm in my adversity, true in counsel and trusty in peril,—to a friend often tried and never found wanting;—to yourself.

In so doing, I recur from fiction to truth; and in dedicating to you, in its complete or at least concluded state, a poetical work which is the longest, the most thoughtful and comprehensive of my compositions, I wish to do honor to myself by the record of many years' intimacy with a man of learning, of talent, of steadiness, and of honor. It is not for minds like ours to give or to receive flattery; yet the praises of sincerity have ever been permitted to the voice of friendship; and it is not for you, nor even for others, but to relieve a heart which has not elsewhere, or lately, been so much accustomed to the encounter of good-will as to withstand the shock firmly, that I thus attempt to commemorate your good qualities, or rather the advantages which I have derived from their exertion. Even the recurrence of the date of this letter, the anniversary of the most unfortunate day of my past existence, but which cannot poison my future while I retain the resource of your friendship, and of my own faculties, will henceforth have a more agreeable recollection for both, inasmuch as it will remind us of this my attempt to thank you for an indefatigable regard, such as few men have experienced, and no one could experience without thinking better of his species and of himself.

It has been our fortune to traverse together, at various periods, the countries of chivalry, history, and fable—Spain, Greece, Asia Minor, and Italy; and what Athens and Constantinople were to us a few years ago, Venice and Rome have been more recently. The poem also, or the pilgrim, or both, have accompanied me from first to last; and perhaps it may be a pardonable vanity which induces me to reflect with complacency on a composition which in some degree connects me with the spot where it was produced, and the objects it would fain describe: and however unworthy it may be deemed of those magical and memorable abodes, however short it may fall of our distant conceptions and immediate impressions, yet as a mark of respect for what is venerable, and of feeling for what is glorious, it has been to me a source of pleasure in the production, and I part with it with a kind of regret, which I hardly suspected that events could have left me for imaginary objects.

With regard to the conduct of the last canto, there will be found less of the pilgrim than in any of the preceding, and that little slightly, if at all, separated from the author speaking in his own person. The fact is, that I had become weary of drawing a line which every one seemed determined not to receive: like the Chinese in Goldsmith's "Citizen of the World," whom nobody would believe to be a Chinese, it was in vain that I asserted, and imagined that I had drawn, a distinction between the author and the pilgrim; and the very anxiety to preserve this difference, and disappointment at finding it unavailing, so far crushed my efforts in the composition, that I determined to abandon it altogether —and have done so. The opinions which have been, or may be, formed on that subject, are *now* a matter of indifference; the work is to depend on itself, and not on the writer; and the author, who has no resources in his own mind beyond the reputation, transient or permanent, which is to arise from his literary efforts, deserves the fate of authors.

In the course of the following canto it was my intention, either in the text or in the notes, to have touched upon the present state of Italian literature, and perhaps of manners. But the text, within the limits I proposed, I soon found

hardly sufficient for the labyrinth of external objects, and the consequent reflections; and for the whole of the notes, excepting a few of the shortest, I am indebted to yourself, and these were necessarily limited to the elucidation of the text.

It is also a delicate, and no very grateful task, to dissert upon the literature and manners of a nation so dissimilar; and requires an attention and impartiality which would induce us—though perhaps no inattentive observers, nor ignorant of the language or customs of the people amongst whom we have recently abode—to distrust, or at least defer our judgment, and more narrowly examine our information. The state of literary, as well as political party, appears to run, or to *have* run, so high, that for a stranger to steer impartially between them is next to impossible. It may be enough, then, at least for my purpose, to quote from their own beautiful language: "Mi pare che in un paese tutto poetico, che vanta la lingua la più nobile ed insieme la più dolce, tutte tutte le vie diverse si possono tentare, e che sinche la patria di Alfieri e di Monti non ha perduto l' antico valore, in tutte essa dovrebbe essere la prima." Italy has great names still. Canova, Monti, Ugo Foscolo, Pindemonti, Visconti, Morelli, Cicognara, Albrizzi, Mezzophanti, Mai, Mustoxidi, Aglietti, and Vacca, will secure to the present generation an honorable place in most of the departments of art, science, and belles-lettres; and in some the very highest: Europe —the World—has but one Canova.

It has been somewhere said by Alfieri, that "La pianta uomo nasce più robusta in Italia che in qualungue altra terra—e che gli stessi atroci delitti che vi si commettono ne sono una prova." Without subscribing to the latter part of his proposition—a dangerous doctrine, the truth of which may be disputed on better grounds, namely, that the Italians are in no respect more ferocious than their neighbors—that man must be wilfully blind, or ignorantly heedless, who is not struck with the extraordinary capacity of this people, or, if such a word be admissible, their *capabilities*, the facility of their acquisitions, the rapidity of their conceptions, the fire of their genius, their sense of beauty, and, amidst all the disadvantages of repeated revolutions, the desolation of battles, and the despair of ages, their still unquenched "longing after immortality,"—the immortality of independence. And when we ourselves, in riding round the walls of Rome, heard the simple lament of the laborers' chorus, "Roma! Roma! Roma! Roma non è più come era prima," it was difficult not to contrast this melancholy dirge with the bacchanal roar of the songs of exultation still yelled from the London taverns, over the carnage of Mont St. Jean, and the betrayal of Genoa, of Italy, of France, and of the world, by men whose conduct you yourself have exposed in a work worthy of the better days of our history. For me,—

> "Non movero mai corda
> Ove la turba di sue chiance assorda."

What Italy has gained by the late transfer of nations, it were useless for Englishmen to inquire, till it becomes ascertained that England has acquired something more than a permanent army and a suspended Habeas Corpus: it is enough for them to look at home. For what they have done abroad, and especially in the south, "Verily they *will have* their reward," and at no very distant period.

Wishing you, my dear Hobhouse, a safe and agreeable return to that country whose real welfare can be dearer to none than to yourself, I dedicate to you this poem in its completed state; and repeat once more how truly I am ever, your obliged and affectionate friend,

BYRON.

VENICE, *Jan.* 2, 1818.

CANTO IV.

I.

I STOOD in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs;
A palace and a prison on each hand:
I saw from out the wave her structures rise
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand:
A thousand years their cloudy wings expand
Around me, and a dying Glory smiles
O'er the far times when many a subject land
Look'd to the wingèd Lion's marble piles,
Where Venice sate in state, throned on her hundred isles!

II.

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean,
Rising with her tiara of proud towers
At airy distance, with majestic motion,
A ruler of the waters and their powers:
And such she was;—her daughters had their dowers
From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless East
Pour'd in her lap all gems in sparkling showers.
In purple was she robed, and of her feast
Monarchs partook, and deem'd their dignity increased.

III.

In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,
And silent rows the songless gondolier:
Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,
And music meets not always now the ear:
Those days are gone—but Beauty still is here.
States fall, arts fade—but Nature doth not die,
Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear,
The pleasant place of all festivity,
The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy!

IV.

But unto us she hath a spell beyond
Her name in story, and her long array
Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms despond
Above the dogeless city's vanish'd sway;
Ours is a trophy which will not decay
With the Rialto; Shylock and the Moor,
And Pierre, cannot be swept or worn away—
The keystones of the arch! though all were o'er,
For us repeopled were the solitary shore.

V.

The beings of the mind are not of clay;
Essentially immortal, they create
And multiply in us a brighter ray
And more beloved existence: that which Fate
Prohibits to dull life, in this our state
Of mortal bondage, by these spirits supplied,
First exiles, then replaces what we hate;
Watering the heart whose early flowers have died,
And with a fresher growth replenishing the void.

VI.

Such is the refuge of our youth and age,
The first from Hope, the last from Vacancy;
And this worn feeling peoples many a page,
And, may be, that which grows beneath mine eye:
Yet there are things whose strong reality
Outshines our fairy-land; in shape and hues
More beautiful than our fantastic sky,
And the strange constellations which the Muse
O'er her wild universe is skilful to diffuse:

VII.

I saw or dream'd of such,—but let them go,—
They came like truth, and disappear'd like dreams;
And whatsoe'er they were—are now but so;
I could replace them if I would: still teems
My mind with many a form which aptly seems
Such as I sought for, and at moments found;
Let these too go—for waking Reason deems
Such overweening fantasies unsound,
And other voices speak, and other sights surround.

VIII.

I've taught me other tongues—and in strange eyes
Have made me not a stranger; to the mind
Which is itself, no changes bring surprise;
Nor is it harsh to make, nor hard to find
A country with—ay, or without mankind;
Yet was I born where men are proud to be,
Not without cause; and should I leave behind
The inviolate island of the sage and free,
And seek me out a home by a remoter sea,

IX.

Perhaps I loved it well: and should I lay
My ashes in a soil which is not mine,
My spirit shall resume it—if we may
Unbodied choose a sanctuary. I twine
My hopes of being remember'd in my line
With my land's language: if too fond and far
These aspirations in their scope incline,—
If my fame should be, as my fortunes are,
Of hasty growth and blight, and dull Oblivion bar

X.

My name from out the temple where the dead
Are honor'd by the nations—let it be—
And light the laurels on a loftier head!
And be the Spartan's epitaph on me—
"Sparta hath many a worthier son than he."
Meantime I seek no sympathies, nor need;
The thorns which I have reap'd are of the tree
I planted,—they have torn me,—and I bleed:
I should have known what fruit would spring from such
a seed.

XI.

The spouseless Adriatic mourns her lord;
And, annual marriage now no more renew'd,
The Bucentaur lies rotting unrestored,
Neglected garment of her widowhood!
St. Mark yet sees his lion where he stood
Stand, but in mockery of his wither'd power,
Over the proud Place where an Emperor sued,
And monarchs gazed and envied in the hour
When Venice was a queen with an unequall'd dower.

XII.

The Suabian sued, and now the Austrian reigns—
An Emperor tramples where an Emperor knelt;
Kingdoms are shrunk to provinces, and chains
Clank over sceptred cities; nations melt
From Power's high pinnacle, when they have felt
The sunshine for a while, and downward go
Like lauwine loosen'd from the mountain's belt;
Oh for one hour of blind old Dandolo!
Th' octogenarian chief, Byzantium's conquering foe.

XIII.

Before St. Mark still glow his steeds of brass,
Their gilded collars glittering in the sun;
But is not Doria's menace come to pass?
Are they not *bridled?*—Venice, lost and won,
Her thirteen hundred years of freedom done,
Sinks, like a sea-weed, into whence she rose!
Better be whelm'd beneath the waves, and shun,
Even in Destruction's depth, her foreign foes,
From whom submission wrings an infamous repose.

XIV.

In youth she was all glory,—a new Tyre,—
Her very byword sprung from victory,
The "Planter of the Lion," which through fire
And blood she bore o'er subject earth and sea;
Though making many slaves, herself still free,
And Europe's bulwark 'gainst the Ottomite;
Witness Troy's rival, Candia! Vouch it, ye
Immortal waves that saw Lepanto's fight!
For ye are names no time nor tyranny can blight.

XV.

Statues of glass—all shiver'd—the long file
Of her dead Doges are declined to dust;
But where they dwelt, the vast and sumptuous pile
Bespeaks the pageant of their splendid trust;
Their sceptre broken, and their sword in rust,
Have yielded to the stranger: empty halls,
Thin streets, and foreign aspects, such as must
Too oft remind her who and what enthralls,
Have flung a desolate cloud o'er Venice' lovely walls.

XVI.

When Athens' armies fell at Syracuse,
And fetter'd thousands bore the yoke of war,
Redemption rose up in the Attic Muse,
Her voice their only ransom from afar:
See! as they chant the tragic hymn, the car
Of the o'ermaster'd victor stops, the reins
Fall from his hands—his idle scimitar
Starts from its belt—he rends his captive's chains,
And bids him thank the bard for freedom and his strains.

XVII.

Thus, Venice, if no stronger claim were thine,
Were all thy proud heroic deeds forgot,
Thy choral memory of the Bard divine,
Thy love of Tasso, should have cut the knot
Which ties thee to thy tyrants; and thy lot
Is shameful to the nations,—most of all,
Albion! to thee: the Ocean Queen should not
Abandon Ocean's children; in the fall
Of Venice think of thine, despite thy watery wall.

XVIII.

I loved her from my boyhood—she to me
Was as a fairy city of the heart,
Rising like water-columns from the sea,
Of joy the sojourn, and of wealth the mart;
And Otway, Radcliffe, Schiller, Shakspeare's art,
Had stamp'd her image in me, and even so,
Although I found her thus, we did not part,
Perchance even dearer in her day of woe,
Than when she was a boast, a marvel, and a show.

XIX.

I can repeople with the past—and of
The present there is still for eye and thought,
And meditation chasten'd down, enough;
And more, it may be, than I hoped or sought;
And of the happiest moments which were wrought
Within the web of my existence, some
From thee, fair Venice! have their colors caught:
There are some feelings Time can not benumb,
Nor Torture shake, or mine would now be cold and dumb.

XX.

But from their nature will the tannen grow
Loftiest on loftiest and least shelter'd rocks,
Rooted in barrenness, where nought below
Of soil supports them 'gainst the Alpine shocks
Of eddying storms; yet springs the trunk, and mocks
The howling tempest, till its height and frame
Are worthy of the mountains from whose blocks
Of bleak, gray granite, into life it came,
And grew a giant tree;—the mind may grow the same.

XXI.

Existence may be borne, and the deep root
Of life and sufferance make its firm abode
In bare and desolated bosoms: mute
The camel labors with the heaviest load,
And the wolf dies in silence,—not bestow'd
In vain should such example be; if they,
Things of ignoble or of savage mood,
Endure and shrink not, we of nobler clay
May temper it to bear,—it is but for a day.

XXII.

All suffering doth destroy, or is destroy'd,
Even by the sufferer; and, in each event,
Ends:—Some, with hope replenish'd and rebuoy'd,
Return to whence they came—with like intent,
And weave their web again; some, bow'd and bent,
Wax gray and ghastly, withering ere their time,
And perish with the reed on which they leant;
Some seek devotion, toil, war, good or crime,
According as their souls were form'd to sink or climb.

XXIII.

But ever and anon of griefs subdued
There comes a token like a scorpion's sting,
Scarce seen, but with fresh bitterness imbued;
And slight withal may be the things which bring
Back on the heart the weight which it would fling
Aside for ever: it may be a sound—
A tone of music—summer's eve—or spring—
A flower—the wind—the ocean—which shall wound,
Striking the electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound;

XXIV.

And how and why we know not, nor can trace
Home to its cloud this lightning of the mind,
But feel the shock renew'd, nor can efface
The blight and blackening which it leaves behind,
Which out of things familiar, undesign'd,
When least we deem of such, calls up to view
The spectres whom no exorcism can bind,
The cold—the changed—perchance the dead—anew,
The mourn'd, the loved, the lost—too many!—yet how few!

XXV.

But my soul wanders; I demand it back
To meditate amongst decay, and stand
A ruin amidst ruins; there to track
Fallen states and buried greatness, o'er a land
Which *was* the mightiest in its old command,
And *is* the loveliest, and must ever be
The master-mould of Nature's heavenly hand,
Wherein were cast the heroic and the free,
The beautiful, the brave—the lords of earth and sea,

XXVI.

The commonwealth of kings, the men of Rome!
And even since, and now, fair Italy!
Thou art the garden of the world, the home
Of all Art yields, and Nature can decree;
Even in thy desert, what is like to thee?
Thy very weeds are beautiful, thy waste
More rich than other climes' fertility;
Thy wreck a glory, and thy ruin graced
With an immaculate charm which cannot be defaced.

XXVII.

The moon is up, and yet it is not night—
Sunset divides the sky with her—a sea
Of glory streams along the Alpine height
Of blue Friuli's mountains; Heaven is free
From clouds, but of all colors seems to be
Melted to one vast Iris of the West,
Where the Day joins the past Eternity;
While, on the other hand, meek Dian's crest
Floats through the azure air—an island of the blest!

XXVIII.

A single star is at her side, and reigns
With her o'er half the lonely heaven; but still
Yon sunny sea heaves brightly, and remains
Roll'd o'er the peak of the far Rhætian hill,
As Day and Night contending were, until
Nature reclaim'd her order:—gently flows
The deep-dyed Brenta, where their hues instil
The odorous purple of a new-born rose,
Which streams upon her stream, and glass'd within it glows.

XXIX.

Fill'd with the face of heaven, which, from afar,
Comes down upon the waters; all its hues,
From the rich sunset to the rising star,
Their magical variety diffuse:
And now they change; a paler shadow strews
Its mantle o'er the mountains; parting day
Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues
With a new color as it gasps away,
The last still loveliest, till—'tis gone—and all is gray.

XXX.

There is a tomb in Arqua;—rear'd in air,
Pillar'd in their sarcophagus, repose
The bones of Laura's lover: here repair
Many familiar with his well-sung woes,
The pilgrims of his genius. He arose
To raise a language, and his land reclaim
From the dull yoke of her barbaric foes:
Watering the tree which bears his lady's name
With his melodious tears, he gave himself to fame.

XXXI.

They keep his dust in Arqua, where he died;
The mountain-village where his latter days
Went down the vale of years; and 'tis their pride—
An honest pride—and let it be their praise,
To offer to the passing stranger's gaze
His mansion and his sepulchre; both plain
And venerably simple, such as raise
A feeling more accordant with his strain
Than if a pyramid form'd his monumental fane.

XXXII.

And the soft quiet hamlet where he dwelt
Is one of that complexion which seems made
For those who their mortality have felt,
And sought a refuge from their hopes decay'd
In the deep umbrage of a green hill's shade,
Which shows a distant prospect far away
Of busy cities, now in vain display'd,
For they can lure no further; and the ray
Of a bright sun can make sufficient holiday,

XXXIII.

Developing the mountains, leaves, and flowers,
And shining in the brawling brook, where-by,
Clear as its current, glide the sauntering hours
With a calm languor, which, though to the eye
Idlesse it seem, hath its morality.
If from society we learn to live,
'Tis solitude should teach us how to die;
It hath no flatterers; vanity can give
No hollow aid; alone—man with his God must strive:

XXXIV.

Or, it may be, with demons, who impair
The strength of better thoughts, and seek their prey
In melancholy bosoms, such as were
Of moody texture from their earliest day,
And loved to dwell in darkness and dismay,
Deeming themselves predestined to a doom
Which is not of the pangs that pass away;
Making the sun like blood, the earth a tomb,
The tomb a hell, and hell itself a murkier gloom.

XXXV.

Ferrara! in thy wide and grass-grown streets,
Whose symmetry was not for solitude,
There seems as 'twere a curse upon the seats
Of former sovereigns, and the antique brood
Of Este, which for many an age made good
Its strength within thy walls, and was of yore
Patron or tyrant, as the changing mood
Of petty power impell'd, of those who wore
The wreath which Dante's brow alone had worn before.

XXXVI.

And Tasso is their glory and their shame.
Hark to his strain! and then survey his cell!
And see how dearly earn'd Torquato's fame,
And where Alfonso bade his poet dwell.
The miserable despot could not quell
The insulted mind he sought to quench, and blend
With the surrounding maniacs, in the hell
Where he had plunged it. Glory without end
Scatter'd the clouds away—and on that name attend

XXXVII.

The tears and praises of all time, while thine
Would rot in its oblivion—in the sink
Of worthless dust, which from thy boasted line
Is shaken into nothing; but the link
Thou formest in his fortunes bids us think
Of thy poor malice, naming thee with scorn—
Alfonso! how thy ducal pageants shrink
From thee! if in another station born,
Scarce fit to be the slave of him thou mad'st to mourn:

XXXVIII.

Thou! form'd to eat, and be despised, and die,
Even as the beasts that perish, save that thou
Hadst a more splendid trough and wider sty:
He! with a glory round his furrow'd brow,
Which emanated then, and dazzles now,
In face of all his foes, the Cruscan quire,
And Boileau, whose rash envy could allow
No strain which shamed his country's creaking lyre,
That whetstone of the teeth—monotony in wire!

XXXIX.

Peace to Torquato's injured shade! 'twas his
In life and death to be the mark where Wrong
Aim'd with her poison'd arrows; but to miss.
Oh, victor unsurpass'd in modern song!
Each year brings forth its millions; but how long
The tide of generations shall roll on,
And not the whole combined and countless throng
Compose a mind like thine! though all in one
Condensed their scatter'd rays, they would not form a sun

XL.

Great as thou art, yet parallel'd by those,
Thy countrymen, before thee born to shine,
The Bards of Hell and Chivalry: first rose
The Tuscan father's comedy divine;
Then, not unequal to the Florentine,
The southern Scott, the minstrel who call'd forth
A new creation with his magic line,
And, like the Ariosto of the North,
Sang ladye-love and war, romance and knightly worth.

XLI.

The lightning rent from Ariosto's bust
The iron crown of laurel's mimick'd leaves;
Nor was the ominous element unjust,
For the true laurel-wreath which Glory weaves
Is of the tree no bolt of thunder cleaves,
And the false semblance but disgraced his brow;
Yet still, if fondly Superstition grieves,
Know, that the lightning sanctifies below
Whate'er it strikes;—yon head is doubly sacred now!

XLII.

Italia! O Italia! thou who hast
The fatal gift of beauty, which became
A funeral dower of present woes and past,
On thy sweet brow is sorrow plough'd by shame,
And annals graved in characters of flame.
O God! that thou wert in thy nakedness
Less lovely or more powerful, and couldst claim
Thy right, and awe the robbers back, who press
To shed thy blood, and drink the tears of thy distress;

XLIII.

Then might thou more appall; or, less desired,
Be homely and be peaceful, undeplored
For thy destructive charms; then, still untired,
Would not be seen the armèd torrents pour'd
Down the deep Alps; nor would the hostile horde
Of many-nation'd spoilers from the Po
Quaff blood and water; nor the stranger's sword
Be thy sad weapon of defence, and so,
Victor or vanquish'd, thou the slave of friend or foe.

XLIV.

Wandering in youth, I traced the path of him,
The Roman friend of Rome's least mortal mind,
The friend of Tully: as my bark did skim
The bright blue waters with a fanning wind,
Came Megara before me, and behind
Ægina lay, Piræus on the right,
And Corinth on the left; I lay reclined
Along the prow, and saw all these unite
In ruin, even as he had seen the desolate sight;

XLV.

For time hath not rebuilt them, but upreared
Barbaric dwellings on their shatter'd site,
Which only make more mourn'd and more endear'd
The few last rays of their far-scatter'd light,
And the crush'd relics of their vanish'd might.
The Roman saw these tombs in his own age,
These sepulchres of cities, which excite
Sad wonder, and his yet surviving page
The moral lesson bears, drawn from such pilgrimage.

XLVI.

That page is now before me, and on mine
His country's ruin added to the mass
Of perish'd states he mourn'd in their decline,
And I in desolation: all that *was*
Of then destruction *is;* and now, alas!
Rome—Rome imperial, bows her to the storm,
In the same dust and blackness, and we pass
The skeleton of her Titanic form,
Wrecks of another world, whose ashes still are warm.

XLVII.

Yet, Italy! through every other land
Thy wrongs should ring, and shall, from side to side;
Mother of Arts! as once of Arms; thy hand
Was then our guardian, and is still our guide;
Parent of our Religion! whom the wide
Nations have knelt to for the keys of heaven!
Europe, repentant of her parricide,
Shall yet redeem thee, and, all backward driven,
Roll the barbarian tide, and sue to be forgiven.

XLVIII.

But Arno wins us to the fair white walls,
Where the Etrurian Athens claims and keeps
A softer feeling for her fairy halls.
Girt by her theatre of hills, she reaps
Her corn, and wine, and oil, and Plenty leaps
To laughing life, with her redundant horn.
Along the banks where smiling Arno sweeps
Was modern luxury of Commerce born,
And buried Learning rose, redeem'd to a new morn.

XLIX.

There, too, the Goddess loves in stone, and fills
The air around with beauty; we inhale
The ambrosial aspect, which, beheld, instils
Part of its immortality; the veil
Of heaven is half undrawn; within the pale
We stand, and in that form and face behold
What Mind can make, when Nature's self would fail;
And to the fond idolaters of old
Envy the innate flash which such a soul could mould:

L.

We gaze and turn away, and know not where,
Dazzled and drunk with beauty, till the heart
Reels with its fulness; there—for ever there—
Chain'd to the chariot of triumphal Art,
We stand as captives, and would not depart.
Away!—there need no words, nor terms precise,
The paltry jargon of the marble mart,
Where Pedantry gulls Folly—we have eyes:
Blood—pulse—and breast, confirm the Dardan Shepherd's prize.

LI.

Appear'dst thou not to Paris in this guise?
Or to more deeply blest Anchises? or,
In all thy perfect goddess-ship, when lies
Before thee thy own vanquish'd Lord of War?
And gazing in thy face as toward a star,
Laid on thy lap, his eyes to thee upturn,
Feeding on thy sweet cheek! while thy lips are
With lava kisses melting while they burn,
Shower'd on his eyelids, brow, and mouth, as from an urn!

LII.

Glowing, and circumfused in speechless love,
Their full divinity inadequate
That feeling to express, or to improve,
The gods become as mortals, and man's fate
Has moments like their brightest; but the weight
Of earth recoils upon us;—let it go!
We can recall such visions, and create,
From what has been, or might be, things which grow
Into thy statue's form, and look like gods below.

LIII.

I leave to learnèd fingers, and wise hands,
The artist and his ape, to teach and tell
How well his connoisseurship understands
The graceful bend, and the voluptuous swell:
Let these describe the undescribable:
I would not their vile breath should crisp the stream
Wherein that image shall for ever dwell;
The unruffled mirror of the loveliest dream
That ever left the sky on the deep soul to beam.

LIV.

In Santa Croce's holy precincts lie
Ashes which make it holier, dust which is
Even in itself an immortality,
Though there were nothing save the past, and this
The particle of those sublimities
Which have relapsed to chaos:—here repose
Angelo's, Alfieri's bones, and his,
The starry Galileo, with his woes;
Here Machiavelli's earth return'd to whence it rose.

LV.

These are four minds, which, like the elements,
Might furnish forth creation:—Italy!
Time, which hath wrong'd thee with ten thousand rents
Of thine imperial garment, shall deny,
And hath denied, to every other sky,
Spirits which soar from ruin:—thy decay
Is still impregnate with divinity,
Which gilds it with revivifying ray;
Such is the great of yore, Canova is to-day.

LVI.

But where repose the all Etruscan three—
Dante, and Petrarch, and, scarce less than they,
The Bard of Prose, creative spirit! he
Of the Hundred Tales of love—where did they lay
Their bones, distinguish'd from our common clay
In death as life? Are they resolved to dust,
And have their country's marbles nought to say?
Could not her quarries furnish forth one bust?
Did they not to her breast their filial earth entrust?

LVII.

Ungrateful Florence! Dante sleeps afar,
Like Scipio, buried by the upbraiding shore;
Thy factions, in their worse than civil war,
Proscribed the bard whose name for evermore
Their children's children would in vain adore
With the remorse of ages; and the crown
Which Petrarch's laureate brow supremely wore,
Upon a far and foreign soil had grown,
His life, his fame, his grave, though rifled—not thine own.

LVIII.

Boccaccio to his parent earth bequeathed
His dust,—and lies it not her Great among,
With many a sweet and solemn requiem breathed
O'er him who form'd the Tuscan's siren tongue?
That music in itself, whose sounds are song,
The poetry of speech? No;—even his tomb,
Uptorn, must bear the hyæna bigot's wrong,
No more amidst the meaner dead find room,
Nor claim a passing sigh, because it told for *whom!*

LIX.

And Santa Croce wants their mighty dust;
Yet for this want more noted, as of yore
The Cæsar's pageant, shorn of Brutus' bust,
Did but of Rome's best Son remind her more:
Happier Ravenna! on thy hoary shore,
Fortress of falling empire! honor'd sleeps
The immortal exile;—Arqua, too, her store
Of tuneful relics proudly claims and keeps,
While Florence vainly begs her banish'd dead, and weeps.

LX.

What is her pyramid of precious stones?
Of porphyry, jasper, agate, and all hues
Of gem and marble, to encrust the bones
Of merchant-dukes? the momentary dues
Which, sparkling to the twilight stars, infuse
Freshness in the green turf that wraps the dead,
Whose names are mausoleums of the Muse,
Are gently prest with far more reverent tread
Than ever paced the slab which paves the princely head.

LXI.

There be more things to greet the heart and eyes
In Arno's dome of Art's most princely shrine,
Where Sculpture with her rainbow sister vies;
There be more marvels yet—but not for mine:
For I have been accustom'd to entwine
My thoughts with Nature rather in the fields,
Than Art in galleries: though a work divine
Calls for my spirit's homage, yet it yields
Less than it feels, because the weapon which it wields

LXII.

Is of another temper, and I roam
By Thrasimene's lake, in the defiles
Fatal to Roman rashness, more at home;
For there the Carthaginian's warlike wiles
Come back before me, as his skill beguiles
The host between the mountains and the shore,
Where Courage falls in her despairing files,
And torrents, swollen to rivers with their gore,
Reek through the sultry plain, with legions scatter'd o'er.

LXIII.

Like to a forest fell'd by mountain winds;
And such the storm of battle on this day,
And such the frenzy, whose convulsion blinds
To all save carnage, that, beneath the fray,
An earthquake reel'd unheededly away!
None felt stern Nature rocking at his feet,
And yawning forth a grave for those who lay
Upon their bucklers for a winding-sheet;
Such is the absorbing hate when warring nations meet!

LXIV.

The Earth to them was as a rolling bark
Which bore them to Eternity; they saw
The Ocean round, but had no time to mark
The motions of their vessel; Nature's law,
In them suspended, reck'd not of the awe
Which reigns when mountains tremble, and the birds
Plunge in the clouds for refuge, and withdraw
From their down-toppling nests; and bellowing herds
Stumble o'er heaving plains, and man's dread hath no words.

LXV.

Far other scene is Thrasimene now;
Her lake a sheet of silver, and her plain
Rent by no ravage save the gentle plough;
Her aged trees rise thick as once the slain
Lay where their roots are; but a brook hath ta'en—
A little rill of scanty stream and bed—
A name of blood from that day's sanguine rain;
And Sanguinetto tells ye where the dead
Made the earth wet, and turn'd the unwilling waters red.

LXVI.

But thou, Clitumnus! in thy sweetest wave
Of the most living crystal that was e'er
The haunt of river nymph, to gaze and lave
Her limbs where nothing hid them, thou dost roar
Thy grassy banks whereon the milk-white steer
Grazes; the purest god of gentle waters!
And most serene of aspect, and most clear;
Surely that stream was unprofaned by slaughters,
A mirror and a bath for Beauty's youngest daughters!

LXVII.

And on thy happy shore a Temple still,
Of small and delicate proportions, keeps,
Upon a mild declivity of hill,
Its memory of thee; beneath it sweeps
Thy current's calmness; oft from out it leaps
The finny darter with the glittering scales,
Who dwells and revels in thy glassy deeps;
While, chance, some scatter'd water-lily sails
Down where the shallower wave still tells its bubbling tales.

LXVIII.

Pass not unblest the Genius of the place!
If through the air a zephyr more serene
Win to the brow, 'tis his; and if ye trace
Along his margin a more eloquent green,
If on the heart the freshness of the scene
Sprinkle its coolness, and from the dry dust
Of weary life a moment lave it clean
With Nature's baptism—'tis to him ye must
Pay orisons for this suspension of disgust.

LXIX.

The roar of waters!—from the headlong height
Velino cleaves the wave-worn precipice;
The fall of waters! rapid as the light
The flashing mass foams shaking the abyss;
The hell of waters! where they howl and hiss,
And boil in endless torture; while the sweat
Of their great agony, wrung out from this
Their Phlegethon, curls round the rocks of jet
That gird the gulf around, in pitiless horror set,

LXX.

And mounts in spray the skies, and thence again
Returns in an unceasing shower, which round,
With its unemptied cloud of gentle rain,
Is an eternal April to the ground,
Making it all one emerald:—how profound
The gulf! and how the giant element
From rock to rock leaps with delirious bound,
Crushing the cliffs, which, downward worn and rent,
With his fierce footsteps, yield in chasms a fearful vent

LXXI.

To the broad column which rolls on, and shows
More like the fountain of an infant sea
Torn from the womb of mountains by the throes
Of a new world, than only thus to be
Parent of rivers, which flow gushingly,
With many windings, through the vale:—Look back!
Lo! where it comes like an eternity,
As if to sweep down all things in its track,
Charming the eye with dread—a matchless cataract,

LXXII.

Horribly beautiful! but on the verge,
From side to side, beneath the glittering morn,
An Iris sits, amidst the infernal surge,
Like Hope upon a death-bed, and, unworn
Its steady dyes, when all around is torn
By the distracted waters, bears serene
Its brilliant hues with all their beams unshorn:
Resembling, 'mid the torture of the scene,
Love watching Madness with unalterable mien.

LXXIII.

Once more upon the woody Apennine,
The infant Alps, which—had I not before
Gazed on their mightier parents, where the pine
Sits on more shaggy summits, and where roar
The thundering lauwine—might be worshipp'd more;
But I have seen the soaring Jungfrau rear
Her never-trodden snow, and seen the hoar
Glaciers of bleak Mont Blanc both far and near,
And in Chimari heard the thunder-hills of fear,

LXXIV.

The Acroceraunian mountains of old name;
And on Parnassus seen the eagles fly
Like spirits of the spot, as 'twere for fame,
For still they soar'd unutterably high:
I've look'd on Ida with a Trojan's eye;
Athos, Olympus, Ætna, Atlas, made
These hills seem things of lesser dignity,
All, save the lone Soracte's height display'd,
Not *now* in snow, which asks the lyric Roman's aid

LXXV.

For our remembrance, and from out the plain
Heaves like a long-swept wave about to break,
And on the curl hangs pausing: not in vain
May he, who will, his recollections rake,
And quote in classic raptures, and awake
The hills with Latian echoes; I abhorr'd
Too much, to conquer for the poet's sake,
The drill'd dull lesson, forced down word by word
In my repugnant youth, with pleasure to record

LXXVI.

Aught that recalls the daily drug which turn'd
My sickening memory; and, though Time hath taught
My mind to meditate what then it learn'd,
Yet such the fix'd inveteracy wrought
By the impatience of my early thought,
That, with the freshness wearing out before
My mind could relish what it might have sought,
If free to choose, I cannot now restore
Its health; but what it then detested, still abhor.

LXXVII.

Then farewell, Horace; whom I hated so,
Not for thy faults, but mine; it is a curse
To understand, not feel thy lyric flow,
To comprehend, but never love thy verse,
Although no deeper Moralist rehearse
Our little life, nor Bard prescribe his art,
Nor livelier Satirist the conscience pierce,
Awakening without wounding the touch'd heart,
Yet fare thee well—upon Soracte's ridge we part.

LXXVIII.

O Rome! my country! city of the soul!
The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,
Lone mother of dead empires! and control
In their shut breasts their petty misery.
What are our woes and sufferance? Come and see
The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way
O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, Ye!
Whose agonies are evils of a day—
A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

LXXIX.

The Niobe of nations! there she stands,
Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe;
An empty urn within her wither'd hands,
Whose holy dust was scatter'd long ago;
The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now;
The very sepulchres lie tenantless
Of their heroic dwellers: dost thou flow,
Old Tiber! through a marble wilderness?
Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle her distress.

LXXX.

The Goth, the Christian, Time, War, Flood, and Fire,
Have dealt upon the seven-hill'd city's pride;
She saw her glories star by star expire,
And up the steep barbarian monarchs ride,
Where the car climb'd the capitol; far and wide
Temple and tower went down, nor left a site:—
Chaos of ruins! who shall trace the void,
O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,
And say, "here was, or is," where all is doubly night?

LXXXI.

The double night of ages, and of her,
Night's daughter, Ignorance, hath wrapt, and wrap
All round us; we but feel our way to err;
The ocean hath its chart, the stars their map,
And Knowledge spreads them on her ample lap;
But Rome is as the desert, where we steer
Stumbling o'er recollections; now we clap
Our hands, and cry "Eureka!" it is clear—
When but some false mirage of ruin rises near.

LXXXII.

Alas! the lofty city! and alas!
The trebly hundred triumphs! and the day
When Brutus made the dagger's edge surpass
The conqueror's sword in bearing fame away;
Alas, for Tully's voice, and Virgil's lay,
And Livy's pictured page!—but these shall be
Her resurrection; all beside—decay.
Alas, for Earth, for never shall we see
That brightness in her eye she bore when Rome was free!

LXXXIII.

O thou, whose chariot roll'd on Fortune's wheel,
Triumphant Sylla! Thou, who didst subdue
Thy country's foes ere thou wouldst pause to feel
The wrath of thy own wrongs, or reap the due
Of hoarded vengeance till thine eagles flew
O'er prostrate Asia;—thou, who with thy frown
Annihilated senates—Roman, too,
With all thy vices, for thou didst lay down
With an atoning smile a more than earthly crown,

LXXXIV.

The dictatorial wreath,—couldst thou divine
To what would one day dwindle that which made
Thee more than mortal? and that so supine
By aught than Romans Rome should thus be laid?
She who was named Eternal, and array'd
Her warriors but to conquer—she who veil'd
Earth with her haughty shadow, and display'd,
Until the o'er-canopied horizon fail'd,
Her rushing wings—Oh! she who was Almighty hail'd!

LXXXV.

Sylla was first of victors; but our own
The sagest of usurpers, Cromwell; he
Too swept off senates while he hew'd the throne
Down to a block—immortal rebel! See
What crimes it costs to be a moment free
And famous through all ages! but beneath
His fate the moral lurks of destiny;
His day of double victory and death
Beheld him win two realms, and, happier, yield his breath.

LXXXVI.

The third of the same moon whose former course
Had all but crown'd him, on the selfsame day
Deposed him gently from his throne of force,
And laid him with the earth's preceding clay.
And show'd not Fortune thus how fame and sway,
And all we deem delightful, and consume
Our souls to compass through each arduous way,
Are in her eyes less happy than the tomb?
Were they but so in man's, how different were his doom!

LXXXVII.

And thou, dread statue! yet existent in
The austerest form of naked majesty,
Thou who beheldest, 'mid the assassins' din,
At thy bathed base the bloody Cæsar lie,
Folding his robe in dying dignity,
An offering to thine altar from the queen
Of gods and men, great Nemesis! did he die,
And thou, too, perish, Pompey? have ye been
Victors of countless kings, or puppets of a scene?

LXXXVIII.

And thou, the thunder-stricken nurse of Rome!
She-wolf! whose brazen-imaged dugs impart
The milk of conquest yet within the dome
Where, as a monument of antique art,
Thou standest:—Mother of the mighty heart,
Which the great founder suck'd from thy wild teat,
Scorch'd by the Roman Jove's ethereal dart,
And thy limbs black'd with lightning—dost thou yet
Guard thine immortal cubs, nor thy fond charge forget?

LXXXIX.

Thou dost;—but all thy foster-babes are dead—
The men of iron; and the world hath rear'd
Cities from out their sepulchres: men bled
In imitation of the things they fear'd,
And fought and conquer'd, and the same course steer'd,
At apish distance; but as yet none have,
Nor could, the same supremacy have near'd,
Save one vain man, who is not in the grave,
But, vanquish'd by himself, to his own slaves a slave,

XC.

The fool of false dominion—and a kind
Of bastard Cæsar, following him of old
With steps unequal; for the Roman's mind
Was modell'd in a less terrestrial mould,
With passions fiercer, yet a judgment cold,
And an immortal instinct which redeem'd
The frailties of a heart so soft, yet bold.
Alcides with the distaff now he seem'd
At Cleopatra's feet,—and now himself he beam'd,

XCI.

And came, and saw, and conquer'd! But the man
Who would have tamed his eagles down to flee,
Like a train'd falcon, in the Gallic van,
Which he, in sooth, long led to victory,
With a deaf heart which never seem'd to be
A listener to itself, was strangely framed;
With but one weakest weakness—vanity:
Coquettish in ambition, still he aim'd—
At what? Can he avouch—or answer what he claim'd?

XCII.

And would be all or nothing—nor could wait
For the sure grave to level him; few years
Had fix'd him with the Cæsars in his fate,
On whom we tread: For *this* the conqueror rears
The arch of triumph! and for this the tears
And blood of earth flow on as they have flow'd,
An universal deluge, which appears
Without an ark for wretched man's abode,
And ebbs but to reflow!—Renew thy rainbow, God!

XCIII.

What from this barren being do we reap?
Our senses narrow, and our reason frail,
Life short, and truth a gem which loves the deep,
And all things weigh'd in custom's falsest scale;
Opinion an omnipotence,—whose veil
Mantles the earth with darkness, until right
And wrong are accidents, and men grow pale
Lest their own judgments should become too bright,
And their free thoughts be crimes, and earth have too much light.

XCIV.

And thus they plod in sluggish misery,
Rotting from sire to son, and age to age,
Proud of their trampled nature, and so die,
Bequeathing their hereditary rage
To the new race of inborn slaves, who wage
War for their chains, and rather than be free,
Bleed gladiator-like, and still engage
Within the same arena where they see
Their fellows fall before, like leaves of the same tree.

XCV.

I speak not of men's creeds—they rest between
Man and his Maker—but of things allow'd,
Averr'd, and known,—and daily, hourly seen—
The yoke that is upon us doubly bow'd,
And the intent of tyranny avow'd,
The edict of Earth's rulers, who are grown
The apes of him who humbled once the proud,
And shook them from their slumbers on the throne;
Too glorious, were this all his mighty arm had done.

XCVI.

Can tyrants but by tyrants conquer'd be,
And Freedom find no champion and no child
Such as Columbia saw arise when she
Sprung forth a Pallas, arm'd and undefiled?
Or must such minds be nourish'd in the wild,
Deep in the unpruned forest, 'midst the roar
Of cataracts, where nursing Nature smiled
On infant Washington? Has Earth no more
Such seeds within her breast, or Europe no such shore?

XCVII.

But France got drunk with blood to vomit crime,
And fatal have her Saturnalia been
To Freedom's cause, in every age and clime;
Because the deadly days which we have seen,
And vile Ambition, that built up between
Man and his hopes an adamantine wall,
And the base pageant last upon the scene,
Are grown the pretext for the eternal thrall
Which nips life's tree, and dooms man's worst—his second fall.

XCVIII.

Yet, Freedom! yet thy banner, torn, but flying,
Streams like the thunder-storm *against* the wind;
Thy trumpet-voice, though broken now and dying,
The loudest still the tempest leaves behind;
Thy tree hath lost its blossoms, and the rind,
Chopp'd by the axe, looks rough and little worth,
But the sap lasts—and still the seed we find
Sown deep, even in the bosom of the North;
So shall a better spring less bitter fruit bring forth.

XCIX.

There is a stern round tower of other days,
Firm as a fortress, with its fence of stone,
Such as an army's baffled strength delays,
Standing with half its battlements alone,
And with two thousand years of ivy grown,
The garland of eternity, where wave
The green leaves over all by time o'erthrown;—
What was this tower of strength? within its cave
What treasure lay so lock'd, so hid?—A woman's grave.

C.

But who was she, the lady of the dead,
Tomb'd in a palace? Was she chaste and fair?
Worthy a king's—or more—a Roman's bed?
What race of chiefs and heroes did she bear?
What daughter of her beauties was the heir?
How lived—how loved—how died she? Was she not
So honor'd—and conspicuously there,
Where meaner relics must not dare to rot,
Placed to commemorate a more than mortal lot?

CI.

Was she as those who love their lords, or they
Who love the lords of others? such have been
Even in the olden time, Rome's annals say.
Was she a matron of Cornelia's mien,
Or the light air of Egypt's graceful queen,
Profuse of joy—or 'gainst it did she war,
Inveterate in virtue? Did she lean
To the soft side of the heart, or wisely bar
Love from amongst her griefs?—for such the affections are.

CII.

Perchance she died in youth: it may be, bow'd
With woes far heavier than the ponderous tomb
That weigh'd upon her gentle dust, a cloud
Might gather o'er her beauty, and a gloom
In her dark eye, prophetic of the doom
Heaven gives its favorites—early death; yet shed
A sunset charm around her, and illume
With hectic light the Hesperus of the dead,
Of her consuming cheek the autumnal leaf-like red.

CIII.

Perchance she died in age—surviving all,
Charms, kindred, children—with the silver gray
On her long tresses, which might yet recall,
It may be, still a something of the day
When they were braided, and her proud array
And lovely form were envied, praised, and eyed
By Rome—But, whither would Conjecture stray?
Thus much alone we know—Metella died,
The wealthiest Roman's wife: Behold his love or pride!

CIV.

I know not why—but standing thus by thee
It seems as if I had thine inmate known,
Thou Tomb! and other days come back on me
With recollected music, though the tone
Is changed and solemn, like the cloudy groan
Of dying thunder on the distant wind;
Yet could I seat me by this ivied stone
Till I had bodied forth the heated mind,
Forms from the floating wreck which Ruin leaves behind;

CV.

And from the planks, far shatter'd o'er the rocks,
Built me a little bark of hope, once more
To battle with the ocean and the shocks
Of the loud breakers, and the ceaseless roar
Which rushes on the solitary shore
Where all lies founder'd that was ever dear:
But could I gather from the wave-worn store
Enough for my rude boat, where should I steer?
There woos no home, nor hope, nor life, save what is here.

CVI.

Then let the winds howl on! their harmony
Shall henceforth be my music, and the night
The sound shall temper with the owlets' cry,
As I now hear them, in the fading light
Dim o'er the bird of darkness' native site,
Answering each other on the Palatine,
With their large eyes, all glistening gray and bright,
And sailing pinions.—Upon such a shrine
What are our petty griefs?—let me not number mine.

CVII.

Cypress and ivy, weed and wallflower grown
Matted and mass'd together, hillocks heap'd
On what were chambers, arch crush'd, column strown
In fragments, choked up vaults, and frescos steep'd
In subterranean damps, where the owl peep'd,
Deeming it midnight:—Temples, baths, or halls?
Pronounce who can; for all that learning reap'd
From her research hath been, that these are walls—
Behold the Imperial Mount! 'tis thus the mighty falls.

CVIII.

There is the moral of all human tales;
'Tis but the same rehearsal of the past,
First Freedom, and then Glory—when that fails,
Wealth, vice, corruption—barbarism at last.
And History, with all her volumes vast,
Hath but *one* page—'tis better written here,
Where gorgeous Tyranny hath thus amass'd
All treasures, all delights, that eye or ear,
Heart, soul could seek, tongue ask—Away with words: draw near,

CIX.

Admire, exult—despise—laugh, weep,—for here
There is such matter for all feeling:—Man!
Thou pendulum betwixt a smile and tear,
Ages and realms are crowded in this span,
This mountain, whose obliterated plan
The pyramid of empires pinnacled,
Of Glory's gewgaws shining in the van
Till the sun's rays with added flame were fill'd!
Where are its golden roofs? where those who dared to build?

CX.

Tully was not so eloquent as thou,
Thou nameless column with the buried base!
What are the laurels of the Cæsar's brow?
Crown me with ivy from his dwelling-place.
Whose arch or pillar meets me in the face,
Titus or Trajan's? No—'tis that of Time:
Triumph, arch, pillar, all he doth displace,
Scoffing; and apostolic statues climb
To crush the imperial urn, whose ashes slept sublime,

CXI.

Buried in air, the deep blue sky of Rome,
And looking to the stars: they had contain'd
A spirit which with these would find a home,
The last of those who o'er the whole earth reign'd,
The Roman globe, for after none sustain'd,
But yielded back his conquests:—he was more
Than a mere Alexander, and unstain'd
With household blood and wine, serenely wore
His sovereign virtues—still we Trajan's name adore,

CXII.

Where is the rock of Triumph, the high place
Where Rome embraced her heroes? where the steep
Tarpeian? fittest goal of Treason's race,
The promontory whence the Traitor's Leap
Cured all ambition. Did the Conquerors heap
Their spoils here? Yes; and in yon field below,
A thousand years of silenced factions sleep—
The Forum, where the immortal accents glow,
And still the eloquent air breathes—burns with Cicero!

CXIII.

The field of freedom, faction, fame, and blood:
Here a proud people's passions were exhaled,
From the first hour of empire in the bud
To that when further worlds to conquer fail'd;
But long before had Freedom's face been veil'd,
And Anarchy assumed her attributes;
Till every lawless soldier who assail'd
Trod on the trembling Senate's slavish mutes,
Or raised the venal voice of baser prostitutes.

CXIV.

Then turn we to our latest tribune's name,
From her ten thousand tyrants turn to thee,
Redeemer of dark centuries of shame—
The friend of Petrarch—hope of Italy—
Rienzi! last of Romans! While the tree
Of freedom's wither'd trunk puts forth a leaf,
Even for thy tomb a garland let it be—
The forum's champion, and the people's chief—
Her new-born Numa thou—with reign, alas! too brief.

CXV.

Egeria! sweet creation of some heart
Which found no mortal resting-place so fair
As thine ideal breast; whate'er thou art
Or wert,—a young Aurora of the air,
The nympholepsy of some fond despair;
Or, it might be, a beauty of the earth,
Who found a more than common votary there
Too much adoring; whatsoe'er thy birth,
Thou wert a beautiful thought, and softly bodied forth.

CXVI.

The mosses of thy fountain still are sprinkled
With thine Elysian water-drops; the face
Of thy cave-guarded spring, with years unwrinkled,
Reflects the meek-eyed genius of the place,
Whose green wild margin now no more erase
Art's works; nor must the delicate waters sleep,
Prison'd in marble, bubbling from the base
Of the cleft statue, with a gentle leap
The rill runs o'er, and round, fern, flowers, and ivy creep,

CXVII.

Fantastically tangled: the green hills
Are clothed with early blossoms, through the grass
The quick-eyed lizard rustles, and the bills
Of summer-birds sing welcome as ye pass;
Flowers fresh in hue, and many in their class,
Implore the pausing step, and with their dyes
Dance in the soft breeze in a fairy mass;
The sweetness of the violet's deep-blue eyes,
Kiss'd by the breath of heaven, seems color'd by its skies.

CXVIII.

Here didst thou dwell, in this enchanted cover,
Egeria! thy all heavenly bosom beating
For the far footsteps of thy mortal lover;
The purple Midnight veil'd that mystic meeting
With her most starry canopy, and seating
Thyself by thine adorer, what befell?
This cave was only shaped out for the greeting
Of an enamour'd Goddess, and the cell
Haunted by holy Love—the earliest oracle!

CXIX.

And didst thou not, thy breast to his replying,
Blend a celestial with a human heart;
And Love, which dies as it was born, in sighing,
Share with immortal transport? Could thine art
Make them indeed immortal, and impart
The purity of heaven to earthly joys,
Expel the venom and not blunt the dart—
The dull satiety which all destroys—
And root from out the soul the deadly weed which cloys?

CXX.

Alas! our young affections run to waste,
Or water but the desert; whence arise
But weeds of dark luxuriance, tares of haste,
Rank at the core, though tempting to the eyes,
Flowers whose wild odors breathe but agonies,
And trees whose gums are poison; such the plants
Which spring beneath her steps as Passion flies
O'er the world's wilderness, and vainly pants
For some celestial fruit forbidden to our wants.

CXXI.

O Love! no habitant of earth thou art—
An unseen seraph, we believe in thee,
A faith whose martyrs are the broken heart,
But never yet hath seen, nor e'er shall see
The naked eye, thy form, as it should be;
The mind hath made thee, as it peopled heaven,
Even with its own desiring phantasy,
And to a thought such shape and image given,
As haunts the unquench'd soul—parch'd—wearied—wrung—
and riven.

CXXII.

Of its own beauty is the mind diseased,
And fevers into false creation:—where,
Where are the forms the sculptor's soul hath seized?
In him alone. Can Nature show so fair?
Where are the charms and virtues which we dare
Conceive in boyhood and pursue as men,
The unreach'd Paradise of our despair,
Which o'er-informs the pencil and the pen,
And overpowers the page where it would bloom again?

CXXIII.

Who loves, raves—'tis youth's frenzy—but the cure
Is bitterer still; as charm by charm unwinds
Which robed our idols, and we see too sure
Nor worth nor beauty dwells from out the mind's
Ideal shape of such; yet still it binds
The fatal spell, and still it draws us on,
Reaping the whirlwind from the oft-sown winds;
The stubborn heart, its alchemy begun,
Seems ever near the prize—wealthiest when most undone.

CXXIV.

We wither from our youth, we gasp away—
Sick—sick; unfound the boon—unslaked the thirst,
Though to the last, in verge of our decay,
Some phantom lures, such as we sought at first—
But all too late—so are we doubly curst.
Love, fame, ambition, avarice—'tis the same,
Each idle—and all ill—and none the worst—
For all are meteors with a different name,
And Death the sable smoke where vanishes the flame.

CXXV.

Few—none—find what they love or could have loved:
Though accident, blind contact, and the strong
Necessity of loving, have removed
Antipathies—but to recur, ere long,
Envenom'd with irrevocable wrong;
And Circumstance, that unspiritual god
And miscreator, makes and helps along
Our coming evils with a crutch-like rod,
Whose touch turns Hope to dust—the dust we all have trod.

CXXVI.

Our life is a false nature—'tis not in
The harmony of things,—this hard decree,
This uneradicable taint of sin,
This boundless upas, this all-blasting tree,
Whose root is earth, whose leaves and branches be
The skies which rain their plagues on men like dew—
Disease, death, bondage, all the woes we see—
And worse, the woes we see not—which throb through
The immedicable soul, with heart-aches ever new.

CXXVII.

Yet let us ponder boldly—'tis a base
Abandonment of reason to resign
Our right of thought—our last and only place
Of refuge; this, at least, shall still be mine:
Though from our birth the faculty divine
Is chain'd and tortured—cabin'd, cribb'd, confined,
And bred in darkness, lest the truth should shine
Too brightly on the unprepared mind,
The beam pours in, for time and skill will couch the blind.

CXXVIII.

Arches on arches! as it were that Rome,
Collecting the chief trophies of her line,
Would build up all her triumphs in one dome,
Her Coliseum stands; the moonbeams shine
As 'twere its natural torches, for divine
Should be the light which streams here, to illume
This long-explored but still exhaustless mine
Of contemplation; and the azure gloom
Of an Italian night, where the deep skies assume

CXXIX.

Hues which have words, and speak to ye of heaven,
Floats o'er this vast and wondrous monument,
And shadows forth its glory. There is given
Unto the things of earth, which Time hath bent,
A spirit's feeling, and where he hath leant
His hand, but broke his scythe, there is a power
And magic in the ruin'd battlement,
For which the palace of the present hour
Must yield its pomp, and wait till ages are its dower.

CXXX.

O Time! the beautifier of the dead,
Adorner of the ruin, comforter
And only healer when the heart hath bled—
Time! the corrector where our judgments err,
The test of truth, love,—sole philosopher,
For all beside are sophists, from thy thrift,
Which never loses though it doth defer—
Time, the avenger! unto thee I lift
My hands, and eyes, and heart, and crave of thee a gift:

CXXXI.

Amidst this wreck, where thou hast made a shrine
And temple more divinely desolate,
Among thy mightier offerings here are mine,
Ruins of years—though few, yet full of fate:—
If thou hast ever seen me too elate,
Hear me not; but if calmly I have borne
Good, and reserved my pride against the hate
Which shall not whelm me, let me not have worn
This iron in my soul in vain—shall *they* not mourn?

CXXXII.

And thou, who never yet of human wrong
Left the unbalanced scale, great Nemesis!
Here, where the ancient paid thee homage long—
Thou, who didst call the Furies from the abyss,
And round Orestes bade them howl and hiss
For that unnatural retribution—just,
Had it but been from hands less near—in this
Thy former realm, I call thee from the dust!
Dost thou not hear my heart?—Awake! thou shalt, and must.

CXXXIII.

It is not that I may not have incurr'd
For my ancestral faults or mine the wound;
I bleed withal, and had it been conferr'd
With a just weapon, it had flow'd unbound;
But now my blood shall not sink in the ground;
To thee I do devote it—*thou* shalt take
The vengeance, which shall yet be sought and found,
Which if *I* have not taken for the sake——
But let that pass—I sleep, but thou shalt yet awake.

CXXXIV.

And if my voice break forth, 'tis not that now
I shrink from what is suffer'd: let him speak
Who hath beheld decline upon my brow,
Or seen my mind's convulsion leave it weak;
But in this page a record will I seek.
Not in the air shall these my words disperse,
Though I be ashes; a far hour shall wreak
The deep prophetic fulness of this verse,
And pile on human heads the mountain of my curse!

CXXXV.

That curse shall be Forgiveness.—Have I not—
Hear me, my mother Earth! behold it, Heaven!—
Have I not had to wrestle with my lot?
Have I not suffer'd things to be forgiven?
Have I not had my brain sear'd, my heart riven,
Hopes sapp'd, name blighted, Life's life lied away?
And only not to desperation driven,
Because not altogether of such clay
As rots into the souls of those whom I survey.

CXXXVI.

From mighty wrongs to petty perfidy
Have I not seen what human things could do?
From the loud roar of foaming calumny
To the small whisper of the as paltry few,
And subtler venom of the reptile crew,
The Janus glance of whose significant eye,
Learning to lie with silence, would *seem* true,
And without utterance, save the shrug or sigh,
Deal round to happy fools its speechless obloquy.

CXXXVII.

But I have lived, and have not lived in vain:
My mind may lose its force, my blood its fire,
And my frame perish even in conquering pain;
But there is that within me which shall tire
Torture and Time, and breathe when I expire;
Something unearthly, which they deem not of,
Like the remember'd tone of a mute lyre,
Shall on their soften'd spirits sink, and move
In hearts all rocky, now the late remorse of love.

CXXXVIII.

The seal is set.—Now welcome, thou dread power!
Nameless, yet thus omnipotent, which here
Walk'st in the shadow of the midnight hour
With a deep awe, yet all distinct from fear:
Thy haunts are ever where the dead walls rear
Their ivy mantles, and the solemn scene
Derives from thee a sense so deep and clear
That we become a part of what has been,
And grow unto the spot, all-seeing but unseen.

CXXXIX.

And the buzz of eager nations ran,
In murmur'd pity, or loud-roar'd applause,
As man was slaughter'd by his fellow-man.
And wherefore slaughter'd? wherefore, but because
Such was the bloody Circus' genial laws,
And the imperial pleasure. Wherefore not?
What matters where we fall to fill the mâws
Of worms—on battle-plains or listed spot?
Both are but theatres where the chief actors rot.

CXL.

I see before me the Gladiator lie:
He leans upon his hand—his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony,
And his droop'd head sinks gradually low—
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow
From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
Like the first of a thunder-shower; and now
The arena swims around him—he is gone,
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch who won.

CXLI.

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
Were with his heart, and that was far away;
He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,
There were his young barbarians all at play,
There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,
Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday—
All this rush'd with his blood—Shall he expire,
And unavenged?—Arise! ye Goths, and glut your ire!

CXLII.

But here, where murder breathed her bloody steam;
And here, where buzzing nations choked the ways,
And roar'd or murmur'd like a mountain-stream
Dashing or winding as its torrent strays;
Here where the Roman million's blame or praise
Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd,
My voice sounds much—and fall the stars' faint rays
On the arena void—seats crush'd—walls bow'd—
And galleries, where my steps seem echoes strangely loud.

CXLIII.

A ruin—yet what ruin! from its mass
Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been rear'd;
Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass,
And marvel where the spoil could have appear'd.
Hath it indeed been plunder'd, or but clear'd?
Alas! developed, opens the decay,
When the colossal fabric's form is near'd;
It will not bear the brightness of the day,
Which streams too much on all years, man, have reft away.

CXLIV.

But when the rising moon begins to climb
Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there;
When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,
And the low night-breeze waves along the air
The garland-forest, which the gray walls wear,
Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head;
When the light shines serene but doth not glare,
Then in this magic circle raise the dead:
Heroes have trod this spot—'tis on their dust ye tread.

CXLV.

"While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand;
When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall;
And when Rome falls—the World." From our own land
Thus spake the pilgrims o'er this mighty wall
In Saxon times, which we are wont to call
Ancient; and these three mortal things are still
On their foundations, and unalter'd all;
Rome and her Ruin past Redemption's skill,
The World—the same wide den—of thieves, or what ye will.

CXLVI.

Simple, erect, severe, austere, sublime—
Shrine of all saints, and temple of all gods,
From Jove to Jesus—spared and blest by time;
Looking tranquillity, while falls or nods
Arch, empire, each thing round thee, and man plods
His way through thorns to ashes—glorious dome!
Shalt thou not last?—Time's scythe and tyrants' rods
Shiver upon thee—sanctuary and home
Of art and piety—Pantheon!—pride of Rome!

CXLVII.

Relic of nobler days, and noblest arts!
Despoil'd yet perfect, with thy circle spreads
A holiness appealing to all hearts—
To art a model; and to him who treads
Rome for the sake of ages, Glory sheds
Her light through thy sole aperture; to those
Who worship, here are altars for their beads;
And they who feel for genius may repose
Their eyes on honor'd forms, whose busts around them close.

CXLVIII.

There is a dungeon, in whose dim drear light
What do I gaze on? Nothing: Look again!
Two forms are slowly shadow'd on my sight—
Two insulated phantoms of the brain:
It is not so; I see them full and plain—
An old man, and a female young and fair,
Fresh as a nursing mother, in whose vein
The blood is nectar;—but what doth she there,
With her unmantled neck, and bosom white and bare?

CXLIX.

Full swells the deep pure fountain of young life,
Where *on* the heart and *from* the heart we took
Our first and sweetest nurture, when the wife,
Blest into mother, in the innocent look,
Or even the piping cry of lips that brook
No pain and small suspense, a joy perceives
Man knows not, when from out its cradled nook
She sees her little bud put forth its leaves—
What may the fruit be yet?—I know not—Cain was Eve's.

CL.

But here youth offers to old age the food,
The milk of his own gift:—it is her sire
To whom she renders back the debt of blood
Born with her birth. No; he shall not expire
While in those warm and lovely veins the fire
Of health and holy feeling can provide
Great Nature's Nile, whose deep stream rises higher
Than Egypt's river:—from that gentle side
Drink, drink and live, old man! heaven's realm holds no
such tide.

CLI.

The starry fable of the milky way
Has not thy story's purity; it is
A constellation of a sweeter ray,
And sacred Nature triumphs more in this
Reverse of her decree, than in the abyss
Where sparkle distant worlds:—Oh, holiest nurse!
No drop of that clear stream its way shall miss
To thy sire's heart, replenishing its source
With life, as our freed souls rejoin the universe.

CLII.

Turn to the Mole which Hadrian rear'd on high,
Imperial mimic of old Egypt's piles,
Colossal copyist of deformity,
Whose travell'd phantasy from the far Nile's
Enormous model, doom'd the artist's toils
To build for giants, and for his vain earth,
His shrunken ashes, raise this dome: How smiles
The gazer's eye with philosophic mirth,
To view the huge design which sprung from such a birth!

CLIII.

But lo! the dome—the vast and wondrous dome,
To which Diana's marvel was a cell—
Christ's mighty shrine above his martyr's tomb!
I have beheld the Ephesian's miracle—
Its columns strew the wilderness, and dwell
The hyæna and the jackal in their shade;
I have beheld Sophia's bright roofs swell
Their glittering mass i' the sun, and have survey'd
Its sanctuary the while the usurping Moslem pray'd;

CLIV.

But thou, of temples old, or altars new,
Standest alone—with nothing like to thee—
Worthiest of God, the holy and the true.
Since Zion's desolation, when that He
Forsook His former city, what could be,
Of earthly structures, in His honor piled,
Of a sublimer aspect? Majesty,
Power, Glory, Strength, and Beauty, all are aisled
In this eternal ark of worship undefiled.

CLV.

Enter: its grandeur overwhelms thee not;
And why? it is not lessen'd; but thy mind,
Expanded by the genius of the spot,
Has grown colossal, and can only find
A fit abode wherein appear enshrined
Thy hopes of immortality; and thou
Shalt one day, if found worthy, so defined,
See thy God face to face, as thou dost now
His Holy of Holies, nor be blasted by His brow.

CLVI.

Thou movest—but increasing with the advance,
Like climbing some great Alp, which still doth rise,
Deceived by its gigantic elegance;
Vastness which grows—but grows to harmonize—
All musical in its immensities;
Rich marbles—richer painting—shrines where flame
The lamps of gold—and haughty dome which vies
In air with Earth's chief structures, though their frame
Sits on the firm-set ground—and this the clouds must claim.

CLVII.

Thou seest not all; but piecemeal thou must break,
To separate contemplation, the great whole;
And as the ocean many bays will make,
That ask the eye—so here condense thy soul
To more immediate objects, and control
Thy thoughts until thy mind hath got by heart
Its eloquent proportions, and unroll
In mighty graduations, part by part,
The glory which at once upon thee did not dart,

CLVIII.

Not by its fault—but thine: Our outward sense
Is but of gradual grasp—and as it is
That what we have of feeling most intense
Outstrips our faint expression; even so this
Outshining and o'erwhelming edifice
Fools our fond gaze, and greatest of the great
Defies at first our Nature's littleness,
Till, growing with its growth, we thus dilate
Our spirits to the size of that they contemplate.

CLIX.

Then pause, and be enlighten'd; there is more
In such a survey than the sating gaze
Of wonder pleased, or awe which would adore
The worship of the place, or the mere praise
Of art and its great masters, who could raise
What former time, nor skill, nor thought could plan;
The fountain of sublimity displays
Its depth, and thence may draw the mind of man
Its golden sands, and learn what great conceptions can.

CLX.

Or, turning to the Vatican, go see
Laocoon's torture dignifying pain—
A father's love and mortal's agony
With an immortal's patience blending:—Vain
The struggle; vain, against the coiling strain
And gripe, and deepening of the dragon's grasp,
The old man's clench; the long envenom'd chain
Rivets the living links,—the enormous asp
Enforces pang on pang, and stifles gasp on gasp.

CLXI.

Or view the Lord of the unerring bow,
The God of life, and poesy, and light—
The Sun in human limbs array'd, and brow
All radiant from his triumph in the fight;
The shaft hath just been shot—the arrow bright
With an immortal's vengeance; in his eye
And nostril beautiful disdain, and might
And majesty, flash their full lightnings by,
Developing in that one glance the Deity.

CLXII.

But in his delicate form—a dream of Love,
Shaped by some solitary nymph, whose breast
Long'd for a deathless lover from above,
And madden'd in that vision—are exprest
All that ideal beauty ever bless'd
The mind with in its most unearthly mood,
When each conception was a heavenly guest—
A ray of immortality—and stood,
Starlike, around, until they gather'd to a god!

CLXIII.

And if it be Prometheus stole from heaven
The fire which we endure, it was repaid
By him to whom the energy was given
Which this poetic marble hath array'd
With an eternal glory—which, if made
By human hands, is not of human thought;
And Time himself hath hallow'd it, not laid
One ringlet in the dust—nor hath it caught
A tinge of years, but breathes the flame with which 'twas wrought.

CLXIV.

But where is he, the Pilgrim of my song,
The being who upheld it through the past?
Methinks he cometh late and tarries long.
He is no more—these breathings are his last;
His wanderings done, his visions ebbing fast,
And he himself as nothing:—if he was
Aught but a phantasy, and could be class'd
With forms which live and suffer—let that pass—
His shadow fades away into Destruction's mass,

CLXV.

Which gathers shadow, substance, life, and all
That we inherit in its mortal shroud,
And spreads the dim and universal pall
Through which all things grow phantoms; and the cloud
Between us sinks and all which ever glow'd,
Till Glory's self is twilight, and displays
A melancholy halo scarce allow'd
To hover on the verge of darkness; rays
Sadder than saddest night, for they distract the gaze,

CLXVI.

And send us prying into the abyss,
To gather what we shall be when the frame
Shall be resolved to something less than this
Its wretched essence; and to dream of fame,
And wipe the dust from off the idle name
We never more shall hear,—but never more,
Oh, happier thought! can we be made the same:
It is enough in sooth that *once* we bore
These fardels of the heart—the heart whose sweat was gore.

CLXVII.

Hark! forth from the abyss a voice proceeds,
A long low distant murmur of dread sound,
Such as arises when a nation bleeds
With some deep and immedicable wound;
Through storm and darkness yawns the rending ground,
The gulf is thick with phantoms, but the chief
Seems royal still, though with her head discrown'd,
And pale, but lovely, with maternal grief
She clasps a babe, to whom her breast yields no relief.

CLXVIII.

Scion of chiefs and monarchs, where art thou?
Fond hope of many nations, art thou dead?
Could not the grave forget thee, and lay low
Some less majestic, less beloved head?
In the sad midnight, while thy heart still bled,
The mother of a moment, o'er thy boy,
Death hush'd that pang for ever: with thee fled
The present happiness and promised joy
Which fill'd the imperial isles so full it seem'd to cloy.

CLXIX.

Peasants bring forth in safety.—Can it be,
O thou that wert so happy, so adored!
Those who weep not for kings shall weep for thee,
And Freedom's heart, grown heavy, cease to hoard,
Her many griefs for ONE; for she had pour'd
Her orisons for thee, and o'er thy head
Beheld her Iris.—Thou, too, lonely lord,
And desolate consort—vainly wert thou wed!
The husband of a year! the father of the dead!

CLXX.

Of sackcloth was thy wedding-garment made;
Thy bridal's fruit is ashes: in the dust
The fair-hair'd Daughter of the Isles is laid,
The love of millions! How we did entrust
Futurity to her! and, though it must
Darken above our bones, yet fondly deem'd
Our children should obey her child, and bless'd
Her and her hoped-for seed, whose promise seem'd
Like star to shepherds' eyes:—'twas but a meteor beam'd.

CLXXI.

Woe unto us, not her; for she sleeps well:
The fickle reek of popular breath, the tongue
Of hollow counsel, the false oracle,
Which from the birth of monarchy hath rung
Its knell in princely ears, till the o'erstung
Nations have arm'd in madness, the strange fate
Which tumbles mightiest sovereigns, and hath flung
Against their blind omnipotence a weight
Within the opposing scale, which crushes soon or late,—

CLXXII.

These might have been her destiny; but no,
Our hearts deny it: and so young, so fair,
Good without effort, great without a foe;
But now a bride and mother—and now *there!*
How many ties did that stern moment tear!
From thy Sire's to his humblest subject's breast
Is link'd the electric chain of that despair,
Whose shock was as an earthquake's, and opprest
The land which loved thee, so that none could love thee best.

CLXXIII.

Lo, Nemi! navell'd in the woody hills
So far, that the uprooting wind which tears
The oak from his foundation, and which spills
The ocean o'er its boundary, and bears
Its foam against the skies, reluctant spares
The oval mirror of thy glassy lake;
And, calm as cherish'd hate, its surface wears
A deep cold settled aspect nought can shake,
All coil'd into itself and round, as sleeps the snake.

CLXXIV.

And near Albano's scarce divided waves
Shine from a sister valley;—and afar
The Tiber winds, and the broad ocean laves
The Latian coast where sprung the Epic war,
"Arms and the Man," whose reascending star
Rose o'er an empire:—but beneath thy right
Tully reposed from Rome:—and where yon bar
Of girdling mountains intercepts the sight,
The Sabine farm was till'd, the weary bard's delight.

CLXXV.

But I forget,—My Pilgrim's shrine is won,
And he and I must part,—so let it be—
His task and mine alike are nearly done;
Yet once more let us look upon the sea;
The midland ocean breaks on him and me,
And from the Alban Mount we now behold
Our friend of youth, that Ocean, which when we
Beheld it last by Calpe's rock unfold
Those waves, we follow'd on till the dark Euxine roll'd

CLXXVI.

Upon the blue Symplegades: long years—
Long, though not very many, since have done
Their work on both; some suffering and some tears
Have left us nearly where we had begun:
Yet not in vain our mortal race hath run,
We have had our reward—and it is here;
That we can yet feel gladden'd by the sun,
And reap from earth, sea, joy almost as dear
As if there were no man to trouble what is clear.

CLXXVII.

Oh! that the Desert were my dwelling-place,
With one fair Spirit for my minister,
That I might all forget the human race,
And hating no one, love but only her!
Ye Elements!—in whose ennobling stir
I feel myself exalted—can ye not
Accord me such a being? Do I err
In deeming such inhabit many a spot?
Though with them to converse can rarely be our lot.

CLXXVIII.

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society where none intrudes,
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

CLXXIX.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore;—upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.

CLXXX.

His steps are upon thy paths—thy fields
Are not a spoil for him—thou dost arise
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray
And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth:—there let him lay.

CLXXXI.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war;
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
Alike the Armada's pride, or spoils of Trafalgar.

CLXXXII.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
Thy waters wasted them while they were free,
And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
Has dried up realms to deserts:—not so thou,
Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play—
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow—
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

CLXXXIII.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,
Calm or convulsed—in breeze, or gale, or storm,
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving;—boundless, endless, and sublime—
The image of Eternity—the throne
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

CLXXXIV.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy
I wanton'd with thy breakers—they to me
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing fear,
For I was as it were a child of thee,
And trusted to thy billows far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here.

CLXXXV.

My task is done—my song hath ceased—my theme
Has died into an echo; it is fit
The spell should break of this protracted dream.
The torch shall be extinguish'd which hath lit
My midnight lamp—and what is writ is writ—
Would it were worthier! but I am not now
That which I have been—and my visions flit
Less palpably before me—and the glow
Which in my spirit dwelt is fluttering, faint, and low.

CLXXXVI.

Farewell! a word that must be, and hath been—
A sound which makes us linger;—yet—farewell!
Ye! who have traced the Pilgrim to the scene
Which is his last, if in your memories dwell
A thought which once was his, if on ye swell
A single recollection, not in vain
He wore his sandal-shoon and scallop-shell;
Farewell! with *him* alone may rest the pain,
If such there were—with *you*, the moral of his strain.

JUAN'S LOVE. — Page 668.

EXTRACTS FROM DON JUAN.

THE LAKE POETS, (FROM DEDICATION.)

Bob Southey! You're a poet—Poet-laureate,
And representative of all the race,
Although 'tis true that you're turn'd out a Tory at
Last,—yours has lately been a common case,—
And now, my Epic Renegade! what are ye at?
With all the Lakers, in and out of place?
A nest of tuneful persons, to my eye
Like "four-and-twenty Blackbirds in a pye;

"Which pye being open'd, they began to sing"
(This old song and new simile holds good),
"A dainty dish to set before the King,"
Or Regent, who admires such kind of food;—
And Coleridge, too, has lately taken wing,
But like a hawk encumber'd with his hood,—
Explaining metaphysics to the nation—
I wish he would explain his Explanation.

You, Bob! are rather insolent, you know,
At being disappointed in your wish
To supersede all warblers here below,
And be the only Blackbird in the dish;
And then you overstrain yourself, or so,
And tumble downward like the flying fish
Gasping on deck, because you soar too high, Bob,
And fall, for lack of moisture, quite a-dry, Bob!

And Wordsworth, in a rather long "Excursion"
(I think the quarto holds five hundred pages),
Has given a sample from the vasty version
Of his new system to perplex the sages;
'Tis poetry—at least by his assertion,
And may appear so when the dog-star rages;
And he who understands it would be able
To add a story to the Tower of Babel.

You, Gentlemen! by dint of long seclusion
From better company, have kept your own
At Keswick, and, through still-continued fusion
Of one another's minds, at last have grown
To deem, as a most logical conclusion,
That Poesy has wreaths for you alone:
There is a narrowness in such a notion,
Which makes me wish you'd change your lakes for ocean.

PORTRAIT OF JULIA.

Her eye (I'm very fond of handsome eyes)
Was large and dark, suppressing half its fire
Until she spoke, then through its soft disguise
Flash'd an expression more of pride than ire,
And love than either; and there would arise
A something in them which was not desire,
But would have been, perhaps, but for the soul
Which struggled through and chasten'd down the whole.

Her glossy hair was cluster'd o'er a brow
Bright with intelligence, and fair, and smooth;
Her eyebrows' shape was like the aerial bow,
Her cheek all purple, with the beam of youth,
Mounting, at times, to a transparent glow,
As if her veins ran lightning; she, in sooth,
Possess'd an air and grace by no means common:
Her stature tall—I hate a dumpy woman.

JUAN'S LOVE.

Young Juan wander'd by the glassy brooks,
Thinking unutterable things; he threw
Himself at length within the leafy nooks
Where the wild branch of the cork forest grew;
There poets find materials for their books,
And every now and then we read them through,
So that their plan and prosody are eligible,
Unless, like Wordsworth, they prove unintelligible.

He (Juan, and not Wordsworth) so pursued
His self-communion with his own high soul,
Until his mighty heart, in its great mood,
Had mitigated part, though not the whole
Of its disease; he did the best he could
With things not very subject to control,
And turn'd, without perceiving his condition,
Like Coleridge, into a metaphysician.

He thought about himself, and the whole earth,
Of man the wonderful, and of the stars,
And how the deuce they ever could have birth;
And then he thought of earthquakes, and of wars,

How many miles the moon might have in girth,
Of air-balloons, and of the many bars
To perfect knowledge of the boundless skies;—
And then he thought of Donna Julia's eyes.

In thoughts like these true wisdom may discern
Longings sublime, and aspirations high,
Which some are born with, but the most part learn
To plague themselves withal, they know not why:
'Twas strange that one so young should thus concern
His brain about the action of the sky;
If *you* think 'twas philosophy that this did,
I can't help thinking puberty assisted.

He pored upon the leaves, and on the flowers,
And heard a voice in all the winds; and then
He thought of wood-nymphs and immortal bowers,
And how the goddesses came down to men:
He miss'd the pathway, he forgot the hours,
And when he look'd upon his watch again,
He found how much old Time had been a winner—
He also found that he had lost his dinner.

Sometimes he turn'd to gaze upon his book,
Boscan, or Garcilasso;—by the wind
Even as the page is rustled while we look,
So by the poesy of his own mind
Over the mystic leaf his soul was shook,
As if 'twere one whereon magicians bind
Their spells, and give them to the passing gale,
According to some good old woman's tale.

SWEET THINGS.

'Tis sweet to hear
At midnight on the blue and moonlit deep
The song and oar of Adria's gondolier,
By distance mellow'd, o'er the waters sweep;
'Tis sweet to see the evening star appear;
'Tis sweet to listen as the night-winds creep
From leaf to leaf; 'tis sweet to view on high
The rainbow, based on ocean, span the sky.

'Tis sweet to hear the watch-dog's honest bark
Bay deep-mouth'd welcome as we draw near home;
'Tis sweet to know there is an eye will mark
Our coming, and look brighter when we come;
'Tis sweet to be awaken'd by the lark,
Or lull'd by falling waters; sweet the hum
Of bees, the voice of girls, the song of birds,
The lisp of children, and their earliest words.

Sweet is the vintage, when the showering grapes
In bacchanal profusion reel to earth,
Purple and gushing: sweet are our escapes
From civic revelry to rural mirth;

Sweet to the miser are his glittering heaps,
  Sweet to the father is his first-born's birth,
Sweet is revenge—especially to women,
Pillage to soldiers, prize-money to seamen.

Sweet is a legacy, and passing sweet
  The unexpected death of some old lady,
Or gentleman of seventy years complete,
  Who 've made "us youth" wait too—too long already
For an estate, or cash, or country seat,
  Still breaking, but with stamina so steady,
That all the Israelites are fit to mob its
Next owner for their double-damn'd post-obits.

'Tis sweet to win, no matter how, one's laurels,
  By blood or ink; 'tis sweet to put an end
To strife; 'tis sometimes sweet to have our quarrels
  Particularly with a tiresome friend:
Sweet is old wine in bottles, ale in barrels;
  Dear is the helpless creature we defend
Against the world; and dear the schoolboy spot
We ne'er forget, though there we are forgot.

SQUANDERED YOUTH.

But now at thirty years my hair is gray—
  (I wonder what it will be like at forty?
I thought of a peruke the other day—)
  My heart is not much greener; and, in short, I
Have squander'd my whole summer while 'twas May,
  And feel no more the spirit to retort; I
Have spent my life, both interest and principal,
And deem not, what I deem'd, my soul invincible.

No more—no more—oh! never more on me
  The freshness of the heart can fall like dew,
Which out of all the lovely things we see
  Extracts emotions beautiful and new,
Hived in our bosoms like the bag o' the bee,
  Think'st thou the honey with those objects grew?
Alas! 'twas not in them, but in thy power,
To double even the sweetness of a flower.

No more—no more—oh! never more, my heart,
  Canst thou be my sole world, my universe!
Once all in all, but now a thing apart,
  Thou canst not be my blessing or my curse:
The illusion 's gone for ever, and thou art
  Insensible, I trust, but none the worse,
And in thy stead I've got a deal of judgment,
Though Heaven knows how it ever found a lodgment.

My days of love are over; me no more*
  The charms of maid, wife, and still less of widow,

* "Me nec femina, nec puer
  Jam, nec spes animi credula mutui,
  Nec certare juvat mero;
  Nec vincire novis tempora floribus."—Hor.

Can make the fool of which they made before,—
In short, I must not lead the life I did do;
The credulous hope of mutual minds is o'er,
The copious use of claret is forbid too,
So for a good old gentlemanly vice,
I think I must take up with avarice.

STORM AND SHIPWRECK.

The ship, call'd the most holy "Trinidada,"
Was steering duly for the port Leghorn;
For there the Spanish family Moncada
Were settled long ere Juan's sire was born:
They were relations, and for them he had a
Letter of introduction, which the morn
Of his departure had been sent him by
His Spanish friends for those in Italy.

His suite consisted of three servants and
A tutor, the licentiate Pedrillo,
Who several languages did understand,
But now lay sick and speechless on his pillow,
And, rocking in his hammock, long'd for land,
His headache being increased by every billow;
And the waves oozing through the port-hole made
His berth a little damp, and him afraid.

'Twas not without some reason, for the wind
Increased at night, until it blew a gale;
And though 'twas not much to a naval mind,
Some landsmen would have look'd a little pale,
For sailors are, in fact, a different kind:
At sunset they began to take in sail,
For the sky show'd it would come on to blow,
And carry away, perhaps, a mast or so.

At one o'clock the wind with sudden shift
Threw the ship right into the trough of the sea,
Which struck her aft, and made an awkward rift,
Started the stern-post, also shatter'd the
Whole of her stern-frame, and, ere she could lift
Herself from out her present jeopardy,
The rudder tore away: 'twas time to sound
The pumps, and there were four feet water found.

One gang of people instantly was put
Upon the pumps, and the remainder set
To get up part of the cargo, and what not;
But they could not come at the leak as yet;
At last they did get at it really, but
Still their salvation was an even bet:
The water rush'd through in a way quite puzzling,
While they thrust sheets, shirts, jackets, bales of muslin,

Into the opening; but all such ingredients
Would have been vain, and they must have gone down,

Despite of all their efforts and expedients,
But for the pumps; I'm glad to make them known
To all the brother tars who may have need hence,
For fifty tons of water were upthrown
By them per hour, and they had all been undone,
But for the maker, Mr. Mann, of London.

As day advanced the weather seem'd to abate,
And then the leak they reckon'd to reduce,
And keep the ship afloat, though three feet yet
Kept two hand and one chain pump still in use.
The wind blew fresh again: as it grew late
A squall came on, and while some guns broke loose,
A gust—which all descriptive power transcends—
Laid with one blast the ship on her beam ends.

There she lay, motionless, and seem'd upset;
The water left the hold and wash'd the decks,
And made a scene men do not soon forget;
For they remember battles, fires, and wrecks,
Or any other thing that brings regret,
Or breaks their hopes, or hearts, or heads, or necks:
Thus drownings are much talk'd of by the divers,
And swimmers, who may chance to be survivors.

Immediately the masts were cut away,
Both main and mizzen; first the mizzen went,
The mainmast follow'd: but the ship still lay
Like a mere log, and baffled our intent.
Foremast and bowsprit were cut down, and they
Eased her at last (although we never meant
To part with all till every hope was blighted),
And then with violence the old ship righted.

It may be easily supposed, while this
Was going on, some people were unquiet,
That passengers would find it much amiss
To lose their lives, as well as spoil their diet;
That even the able seaman, deeming his
Days nearly o'er, might be disposed to riot,
As upon such occasions tars will ask
For grog, and sometimes drink rum from the cask.

There 's nought, no doubt, so much the spirit calms
As rum and true religion: thus it was
Some plunder'd, some drank spirits, some sung psalms,
The high wind made the treble, and as bass
The hoarse harsh waves kept time; fright cured the qualms
Of all the luckless landsmen's sea-sick maws:
Strange sounds of wailing, blasphemy, devotion,
Clamor'd in chorus to the roaring ocean.

Perhaps more mischief had been done, but for
Our Juan, who, with sense beyond his years,
Got to the spirit-room, and stood before
It with a pair of pistols; and their fears,

As if Death were more dreadful by his door
Of fire than water, spite of oaths and tears,
Kept still aloof the crew, who, ere they sunk,
Thought it would be becoming to die drunk.

"Give us more grog," they cried, "for it will be
All one an hour hence." Juan answer'd, "No!
'Tis true that death awaits both you and me,
But let us die like men, not sink below
Like brutes:"—and thus his dangerous post kept he,
And none liked to anticipate the blow;
And even Pedrillo, his most reverend tutor,
Was for some rum a disappointed suitor.

The good old gentleman was quite aghast,
And made a loud and pious lamentation,
Repented all his sins, and made a last
Irrevocable vow of reformation;
Nothing should tempt him more (this peril past)
To quit his academic occupation,
In cloisters of the classic Salamanca,
To follow Juan's wake, like Sancho Panca.

But now there came a flash of hope once more;
Day broke, and the wind lull'd; the masts were gone,
The leak increased; shoals round her, but no shore;
The vessel swam, yet still she held her own.
They tried the pumps again, and though before
Their desperate efforts seem'd all useless grown,
A glimpse of sunshine set some hands to bale—
The stronger pump'd, the weaker thrumm'd a sail.

Under the vessel's keel the sail was past,
And for the moment it had some effect;
But with a leak, and not a stick of mast,
Nor rag of canvas, what could they expect?
But still 'tis best to struggle to the last,
'Tis never too late to be wholly wreck'd:
And though 'tis true that man can only die once,
'Tis not so pleasant in the Gulf of Lyons.

There winds and waves had hurl'd them, and from thence,
Without their will, they carried them away;
For they were forced with steering to dispense,
And never had as yet a quiet day
On which they might repose, or even commence
A jurymast or rudder, or could say
The ship would swim an hour, which, by good luck,
Still swam—though not exactly like a duck.

The wind, in fact, perhaps, was rather less,
But the ship labor'd so, they scarce could hope
To weather out much longer; the distress
Was also great with which they had to cope
For want of water, and their solid mess
Was scant enough: in vain the telescope
Was used—nor sail nor shore appear'd in sight,
Nought but the heavy sea, and coming night.

Again the weather threaten'd,—again blew
A gale, and in the fore and after hold
Water appear'd; yet, though the people knew
All this, the most were patient, and some bold,
Until the chains and leathers were worn through
Of all our pumps:—a wreck complete she roll'd,
At mercy of the waves, whose mercies are
Like human beings during civil war.

Then came the carpenter, at last, with tears
In his rough eyes, and told the captain he
Could do no more: he was a man in years,
And long had voyaged through many a stormy sea,
And if he wept at length, they were not fears
That made his eyelids as a woman's be,
But he, poor fellow, had a wife and children,—
Two things for dying people quite bewildering.

The ship was evidently settling now
Fast by the head; and, all distinction gone,
Some went to prayers again, and made a vow
Of candles to their saints—but there were none
To pay them with; and some look'd o'er the bow;
Some hoisted out the boats; and there was one
That begg'd Pedrillo for an absolution,
Who told him to be damn'd—in his confusion.

Some lash'd them in their hammocks; some put on
Their best clothes, as if going to a fair;
Some cursed the day on which they saw the sun,
And gnash'd their teeth, and, howling, tore their hair;
And others went on as they had begun,
Getting the boats out, being well aware
That a tight boat will live in a rough sea,
Unless with breakers close beneath her lee.

The worst of all was, that in their condition,
Having been several days in great distress,
'Twas difficult to get out such provision
As now might render their long suffering less:
Men, even when dying, dislike inanition;
Their stock was damaged by the weather's stress:
Two casks of biscuit, and a keg of butter,
Were all that could be thrown into the cutter.

But in the long-boat they contrived to stow
Some pounds of bread, though injured by the wet;
Water, a twenty-gallon cask or so;
Six flasks of wine; and they contrived to get
A portion of their beef up from below,
And with a piece of pork, moreover, met,
But scarce enough to serve them for a luncheon—
Then there was rum, eight gallons in a puncheon.

The other boats, the yawl and pinnace, had
Been stove in the beginning of the gale;
And the long-boat's condition was but bad,
As there were but two blankets for a sail,

And one oar for a mast, which a young lad
Threw in by good luck, over the ship's rail;
And two boats could not hold, far less be stored,
To save one half the people then on board.

'Twas twilight, and the sunless day went down
Over the waste of waters; like a veil,
Which, if withdrawn, would but disclose the frown
Of one whose hate is mask'd but to assail.
Thus to their hopeless eyes the night was shown,
And grimly darkled o'er the faces pale,
And the dim desolate deep: twelve days had Fear
Been their familiar, and now Death was here.

Some trial had been making at a raft,
With little hope in such a rolling sea,
A sort of thing at which one would have laugh'd,
If any laughter at such times could be,
Unless with people who too much have quaff'd,
And have a kind of wild and horrid glee,
Half epileptical, and half hysterical:—
Their preservation would have been a miracle.

At half-past eight o'clock, booms, hencoops, spars,
And all things, for a chance, had been cast loose,
That still could keep afloat the struggling tars,
For yet they strove, although of no great use:
There was no light in heaven but a few stars,
The boats put off o'ercrowded with their crews;
She gave a heel, and then a lurch to port,
And, going down head foremost—sunk, in short.

Then rose from sea to sky the wild farewell—
Then shriek'd the timid, and stood still the brave,—
Then some leap'd overboard with dreadful yell,
As eager to anticipate their grave;
And the sea yawn'd around her like a hell,
And down she suck'd with her the whirling wave,
Like one who grapples with his enemy,
And strives to strangle him before he die.

And first one universal shriek there rush'd,
Louder than the loud ocean, like a crash
Of echoing thunder; and then all was hush'd,
Save the wild wind and the remorseless dash
Of billows; but at intervals there gush'd,
Accompanied with a convulsive splash,
A solitary shriek, the bubbling cry
Of some strong swimmer in his agony.

The boats, as stated, had got off before,
And in them crowded several of the crew;
And yet their present hope was hardly more
Than what it had been, for so strong it blew,
There was slight chance of reaching any shore;
And then they were too many, though so few—
Nine in the cutter, thirty in the boat,
Were counted in them when they got afloat.

All the rest perish'd; near two hundred souls
Had left their bodies; and what's worse, alas!
When over Catholics the ocean rolls,
They must wait several weeks before a mass
Takes off one peck of purgatorial coals,
Because, till people know what's come to pass,
They won't lay out their money on the dead—
It costs three francs for every mass that's said.

AN EASTERN PICTURE.

And further on a troop of Grecian girls,
The first and tallest her white kerchief waving,
Were strung together like a row of pearls,
Link'd hand in hand, and dancing; each, too, having
Down her white neck long floating auburn curls—
(The least of which would set ten poets raving);
Their leader sang—and bounded to her song,
With choral step and voice, the virgin throng.

And here, assembled cross-legg'd round their trays,
Small social parties just begun to dine;
Pilaus and meats of all sorts met the gaze,
And flasks of Samian and of Chian wine,
And sherbet cooling in the porous vase;
Above them their desert grew on its vine;
The orange and pomegranate nodding o'er
Dropp'd in their laps, scarce pluck'd, their mellow store.

A band of children, round a snow-white ram,
There wreathe his venerable horns with flowers;
While peaceful, as if still an unwean'd lamb,
The patriarch of the flock all gently cowers
His sober head, majestically tame,
Or eats from out the palm, or playful lowers
His brow, as if in act to butt, and then
Yielding to their small hands, draws back again.

Their classical profiles, and glittering dresses,
Their large black eyes, and soft seraphic cheeks,
Crimson as cleft pomegranates, their long tresses,
The gesture which enchants, the eye that speaks
The innocence which happy childhood blesses,
Made quite a picture of these little Greeks;
So that the philosophical beholder
Sigh'd for their sakes—that they should e'er grow older.

Afar, a dwarf buffoon stood telling tales
To a sedate gray circle of old smokers,
Of secret treasures found in hidden vales,
Of wonderful replies from Arab jokers,
Of charms to make good gold and cure bad ails,
Of rocks bewitch'd that open to the knockers,
Of magic ladies who, by one sole act,
Transform'd their lords to beasts (but that's a fact).

THE POET'S SONG.

THE ISLES OF GREECE.

1.

The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece!
Where burning Sappho loved and sung,
Where grew the arts of war and peace,—
Where Delos rose, and Phœbus sprung!
Eternal summer gilds them yet,
But all, except their sun, is set.

2.

The Scian and the Teian muse,
The hero's harp, the lover's lute,
Have found the fame your shores refuse;
Their place of birth alone is mute
To sounds which echo further west
Than your sires' "Islands of the Blest." *

3.

The mountains look on Marathon—
And Marathon looks on the sea;
And musing there an hour alone,
I dream'd that Greece might still be free;
For, standing on the Persian's grave,
I could not deem myself a slave.

4.

A king sate on the rocky brow
Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis;
And ships, by thousands, lay below,
And men in nations;—all were his!
He counted them at break of day—
And when the sun set, where were they? †

5.

And where are they? and where art thou,
My country? On thy voiceless shore
The heroic lay is tuneless now—
The heroic bosom beats no more!
And must thy lyre, so long divine,
Degenerate into hands like mine?

6.

'Tis something, in the dearth of fame,
Though link'd among a fetter'd race,
To feel at least a patriot's shame,
Even as I sing, suffuse my face;
For what is left the poet here?
For Greeks a blush—for Greece a tear.

* The *νησοι μακαρων* of the Greek poets were supposed to have been the Cape de Verd Islands or the Canaries.

† "Deep were the groans of Xerxes, when he saw
This havoc: for his seat, a lofty mound
Commanding the wide sea, o'erlook'd the hosts.
With rueful cries he rent his royal robes,
And through his troops embattled on the shore
Gave signal of retreat: then started wild
And fled disorder'd."—ÆSCHYLUS.

7.

Must *we* but weep o'er days more blest?
Must *we* but blush?—Our fathers bled.
Earth! render back from out thy breast
A remnant of our Spartan dead!
Of the three hundred grant but three,
To make a new Thermopylæ!

8.

What, silent still? and silent all?
Ah! no;—the voices of the dead
Sound like a distant torrent's fall,
And answer, "Let one living head,
But one arise,—we come, we come!"
'Tis but the living who are dumb.

9.

In vain—in vain; strike other chords;
Fill high the cup with Samian wine!
Leave battles to the Turkish hordes,
And shed the blood of Scio's vine!
Hark! rising to the ignoble call—
How answers each bold Bacchanal!

10.

You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet,
Where is the Pyrrhic phalanx gone?
Of two such lessons, why forget
The nobler and the manlier one?
You have the letters Cadmus gave—
Think ye he meant them for a slave?

11.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
We will not think of themes like these!
It made Anacreon's song divine:
He served—but served Polycrates—
A tyrant; but our masters then
Were still, at least, our countrymen.

12.

The tyrant of the Chersonese
Was freedom's best and bravest friend;
That tyrant was Miltiades!
Oh! that the present hour would lend
Another despot of the kind!
Such chains as his were sure to bind.

13.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
On Suli's rock, and Parga's shore,
Exists the remnant of a line
Such as the Doric mothers bore;
And there, perhaps, some seed is sown,
The Heracleidan blood might own.

14.

Trust not for freedom to the Franks—
They have a king who buys and sells:
In native swords, and native ranks,
The only hope of courage dwells;
But Turkish force, and Latin fraud,
Would break your shield, however broad.

15.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
Our virgins dance beneath the shade—
I see their glorious black eyes shine;
But gazing on each glowing maid,
My own the burning tear-drop laves,
To think such breasts must suckle slaves.

16.

Place me on Sunium's marbled steep,
Where nothing, save the waves and I,
May hear our mutual murmurs sweep;
There, swan-like, let me sing and die:
A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine—
Dash down yon cup of Samian wine!

TWILIGHT.

Sweet hour of twilight!—in the solitude
Of the pine forest, and the silent shore
Which bounds Ravenna's immemorial wood,
Rooted where once the Adrian wave flow'd o'er,
To where the last Cæsarean fortress stood,
Evergreen forest! which Boccaccio's lore
And Dryden's lay made haunted ground to me,
How have I loved the twilight hour and thee!

The shrill cicalas, people of the pine,
Making their summer lives one ceaseless song,
Were the sole echoes, save my steed's and mine,
And vesper bells that rose the boughs along;
The spectre huntsman of Onesti's line,
His hell-dogs, and their chase, and the fair throng
Which learn'd from this example not to fly
From a true lover—shadow'd my mind's eye.

O Hesperus! thou bringest all good things—*
Home to the weary, to the hungry cheer,
To the young bird the parent's brooding wings,
The welcome stall to the o'erlabor'd steer;
Whate'er of peace about our hearthstone clings,
Whate'er our household gods protect of dear,
Are gather'd round us by thy look of rest;
Thou bring'st the child, too, to the mother's breast.

* See Fragment of Sappho.

Soft hour! which wakes the wish and melts the heart
Of those who sail the seas, on the first day
When they from their sweet friends are torn apart;
Or fills with love the pilgrim on his way
As the far bell of vesper makes him start,
Seeming to weep the dying day's decay;
Is this a fancy which our reason scorns?
Ah! surely nothing dies but something mourns! *

When Nero perish'd by the justest doom
Which ever the destroyer yet destroy'd,
Amidst the roar of liberated Rome,
Of nations freed, and the world overjoy'd,
Some hands unseen strew'd flowers upon his tomb,†
Perhaps the weakness of a heart not void
Of feeling for some kindness done, when power
Had left the wretch an uncorrupted hour.

DEATH IN YOUTH.

The heart—which may be broken: happy they!
Thrice fortunate! who of that fragile mould,
The precious porcelain of human clay,
Break with the first fall: they can ne'er behold
The long year link'd with heavy day on day,
And all which must be borne, and never told;
While life's strange principle will often lie
Deepest in those who long the most to die.

"Whom the gods love die young," was said of yore,‡
And many deaths do they escape by this:
The death of friends, and that which slays even more—
The death of friendship, love, youth, all that is,
Except mere breath; and since the silent shore
Awaits at last even those who longest miss
The old archer's shafts, perhaps the early grave
Which men weep over may be meant to save.

HAIDEE'S DREAM.

She dream'd of being alone on the sea-shore,
Chain'd to a rock; she knew not how, but stir
She could not from the spot, and the loud roar
Grew, and each wave rose roughly, threatening her;
And o'er her upper lip they seem'd to pour,
Until she sobb'd for breath, and soon they were
Foaming o'er her lone head, so fierce and high—
Each broke to drown her, yet she could not die.

* "Era gia l' ora che volge 'l disio,
A' naviganti, e 'ntenerisce il cuore:
Lo di ch' han detto a' dolci amici a dio;
E che lo nuovo peregrin' d' amore
Punge, se ode Squilla di lontano,
Che paia 'l giorno pianger che si muore."
DANTE'S *Purgatory*, canto viii.

This last line is the first of Gray's "Elegy," taken by him without acknowledgment.

† See Suetonius for this fact.

‡ See Herodotus.

Anon—she was released, and then she stray'd
O'er the sharp shingles with her bleeding feet,
And stumbled almost every step she made:
And something roll'd before her in a sheet,
Which she must still pursue howe'er afraid:
'Twas white and indistinct, nor stopp'd to meet
Her glance nor grasp, for still she gazed and grasp'd,
And ran, but it escaped her as she clasp'd.

The dream changed:—in a cave she stood, its walls
Were hung with marble icicles: the work
Of ages on its water-fretted halls,
Where waves might wash, and seals might breed and lurk;
Her hair was dripping, and the very balls
Of her black eyes seem'd turn'd to tears, and mirk
The sharp rocks look'd below each drop they caught,
Which froze to marble as it fell,—she thought.

And wet, and cold, and lifeless at her feet,
Pale as the foam that froth'd on his dead brow,
Which she essay'd in vain to clear, (how sweet
Were once her cares, how idle seem'd they now!)
Lay Juan, nor could aught renew the beat
Of his quench'd heart; and the sea dirges low
Rang in her sad ears like a mermaid's song,
And that brief dream appear'd a life too long.

And gazing on the dead, she thought his face
Faded, or alter'd into something new—
Like to her father's features, till each trace
More like and like to Lambro's aspect grew—
With all his keen worn look and Grecian grace;
And starting, she awoke, and what to view?
Oh! Powers of Heaven! what dark eye meets she there?
'Tis—'tis her father's—fix'd upon the pair!

Then shrieking, she arose, and shrieking fell,
With joy and sorrow, hope and fear, to see
Him whom she deem'd a habitant where dwell
The ocean-buried, risen from death, to be
Perchance the death of one she loved too well:
Dear as her father had been to Haidée,
It was a moment of that awful kind——
I have seen such—but must not call to mind.

MOORISH PICTURE.

I leave Don Juan for the present, safe—
Not sound, poor fellow, but severely wounded;
Yet could his corporal pangs amount to half
Of those with which his Haidée's bosom bounded?
She was not one to weep, and rave, and chafe,
And then give way, subdued because surrounded;
Her mother was a Moorish maid, from Fez,
Where all is Eden, or a wilderness.

There the large olive rains its amber store
In marble fonts; there grain, and flower, and fruit,
Gush from the earth until the land runs o'er:
But there, too, many a poison-tree has root,
And midnight listens to the lion's roar,
And long, long deserts scorch the camel's foot,
Or heaving whelm the helpless caravan;
And as the soil is, so the heart of man.

Afric is all the sun's, and as her earth
Her human clay is kindled; full of power
For good or evil, burning from its birth,
The Moorish blood partakes the planet's hour,
And like the soil beneath it will bring forth:
Beauty and love were Haidée's mother's dower;
But her large dark eye show'd deep Passion's force,
Though sleeping like a lion near a source.

DANTE'S COLUMN.

I pass each day where Dante's bones are laid:
A little cupola, more neat than solemn,
Protects his dust, but reverence here is paid
To the bard's tomb, and not the warrior's column:
The time must come, when both alike decay'd,
The chieftain's trophy and the poet's volume,
Will sink where lie the songs and wars of earth,
Before Pelides' death, or Homer's birth.

With human blood that column was cemented,
With human filth that column is defiled,
As if the peasant's coarse contempt were vented
To show his loathing of the spot he soil'd:
Thus is the trophy used, and thus lamented
Should ever be those bloodhounds, from whose wild
Instinct of gore and glory earth has known
Those sufferings Dante saw in hell alone.

LOVE.

Thrones, worlds, et cetera, are so oft upset
By commonest ambition, that when passion
O'erthrows the same, we readily forget,
Or at the least forgive, the loving rash one.
If Antony be well remember'd yet,
'Tis not his conquests keep his name in fashion,
But Actium, lost for Cleopatra's eyes,
Outbalances all Cæsar's victories.

He died at fifty for a queen of forty;
I wish their years had been fifteen and twenty,
For then wealth, kingdoms, worlds are but a sport—I
Remember when, though I had no great plenty
Of worlds to lose, yet still, to pay my court, I
Gave what I had—a heart: as the world went, I
Gave what was worth a world; for worlds could never
Restore me those pure feelings, gone for ever.

'Twas the boy's "mite," and like the "widow's," may
Perhaps be weigh'd hereafter, if not now;
But whether such things do or do not weigh,
All who have loved, or love, will still allow
Life has nought like it. God is love, they say,
And Love 's a god, or was before the brow
Of earth was wrinkled by the sins and tears
Of—but Chronology best knows the years.

EASTERN GROUP.

Of those who had most genius for this sort
Of sentimental friendship, there were three,
Lolah, Katinka, and Dudù; in short,
(To save description) fair as fair can be
Were they, according to the best report,
Though differing in stature and degree,
And clime and time, and country and complexion;
They all alike admired their new connection.

Lolah was dusk as India, and as warm;
Katinka was a Georgian, white and red,
With great blue eyes, a lovely hand and arm,
And feet so small they scarce seem'd made to tread,
But rather skim the earth; while Dudù's form
Look'd more adapted to be put to bed,
Being somewhat large, and languishing, and lazy,
Yet of a beauty that would drive you crazy.

A kind of sleepy Venus seem'd Dudù,
Yet very fit to "murder sleep" in those
Who gazed upon her cheek's transcendent hue,
Her Attic forehead, and her Phidian nose:
Few angles were there in her form, 'tis true,
Thinner she might have been, and yet scarce lose;
Yet, after all, 'twould puzzle to say where
It would not spoil some separate charm to *pare*.

She was not violently lively, but
Stole on your spirit like a May-day breaking;
Her eyes were not too sparkling, yet, half-shut,
They put beholders in a tender taking;
She look'd (this simile 's quite new) just cut
From marble, like Pygmalion's statue waking,
The mortal and the marble still at strife,
And timidly expanding into life.

Lolah demanded the new damsel's name—
"Juanna."—Well, a pretty name enough.
Katinka ask'd her also whence she came—
"From Spain."—"But where *is* Spain?"—"Don't ask such stuff,
Nor show your Georgian ignorance—for shame!"
Said Lolah, with an accent rather rough,
To poor Katinka: "Spain 's an island near
Morocco, betwixt Egypt and Tangier."

A POSTURE.

She stood a moment as a Pythoness
  Stands on her tripod, agonized, and full
Of inspiration gather'd from distress,
  When all the heart-strings like wild horses pull
The heart asunder;—then, as more or less
  Their speed abated or their strength grew dull,
She sunk down on her seat by slow degrees,
And bow'd her throbbing head o'er trembling knees.

Her face declined and was unseen; her hair
  Fell in long tresses like the weeping willow,
Sweeping the marble underneath her chair,
  Or rather sofa, (for it was all pillow,
A low, soft ottoman,) and black despair
  Stirr'd up and down her bosom like a billow,
Which rushes to some shore whose shingles check
Its further course, but must receive its wreck.

Her head hung down, and her long hair in stooping
  Conceal'd her features better than a veil:
And one hand o'er the ottoman lay drooping,
  White, waxen, and as alabaster pale:
Would that I were a painter! to be grouping
  All that a poet drags into detail!
Oh that my words were colors! but their tints
May serve perhaps as outlines or slight hints.

LOVE AND GLORY.

O Love! O Glory! what are ye who fly
  Around us ever, rarely to alight?
There's not a meteor in the polar sky
  Of such transcendent and more fleeting flight.
Chill, and chain'd to cold earth, we lift on high
  Our eyes in search of either lovely light;
A thousand and a thousand colors they
Assume, then leave us on our freezing way.

WARS.

Oh blood and thunder! and oh blood and wounds!
  These are but vulgar oaths, as you may deem,
Too gentle reader! and most shocking sounds:
  And so they are; yet thus is Glory's dream
Unriddled, and as my true Muse expounds
  At present such things, since they are her theme,
So be they her inspirers! Call them Mars,
Bellona, what you will—they mean but wars.

All was prepared—the fire, the sword, the men
  To wield them in their terrible array.
The army, like a lion from his den,
  March'd forth with nerve and sinews bent to slay—

A human Hydra, issuing from its fen
To breathe destruction on its winding way,
Whose heads were heroes, which cut off in vain,
Immediately in others grew again.

History can only take things in the gross;
But could we know them in detail, perchance
In balancing the profit and the loss,
War's merit it by no means might enhance,
To waste so much gold for a little dross,
As hath been done, mere conquest to advance.
The drying up a single tear has more
Of honest fame, than shedding seas of gore.

And why? because it brings self-approbation;
Whereas the other, after all its glare,
Shouts, bridges, arches, pensions from a nation,
Which (it may be) has not much left to spare,
A higher title, or a loftier station,
Though they may make Corruption gape or stare,
Yet in the end, except in Freedom's battles,
Are nothing but a child of Murder's rattles.

And such they are,—and such they will be found:
Not so Leonidas and Washington,
Whose every battlefield is holy ground,
Which breathes of nations saved, not worlds undone.
How sweetly on the ear such echoes sound!
While the mere victor's may appall or stun
The servile and the vain, such names will be
A watchword till the future shall be free.

WELLINGTON.

O Wellington! (or "Villainton"—for Fame
Sounds the heroic syllables both ways;
France could not even conquer your great name,
But punn'd it down to this facetious phrase—
Beating or beaten she will laugh the same),
You have obtain'd great pensions and much praise:
Glory like yours should any dare gainsay,
Humanity would rise, and thunder "Nay!" *

I don't think that you used Kinnaird quite well
In Marin. t's affair—in fact, 'twas shabby,
And like some other things won't do to tell
Upon your tomb in Westminster's old abbey.
Upon the rest 'tis not worth while to dwell,
Such tales being for the tea-hours of some tabby;
But though your years as *man* tend fast to zero,
In fact your grace is still but a *young hero*.

Though Britain owes (and pays you too) so much,
Yet Europe doubtless owes you greatly more:
You have repair'd Legitimacy's crutch,
A prop not quite so certain as before:

* Query, *Ney!* — Printer's Devil.

The Spanish, and the French, as well as Dutch,
Have seen and felt, how strongly you *restore;*
And Waterloo has made the world your debtor,
(I wish your bards would sing it rather better.)

You are "the best of cut-throats:"—do not start;
The phrase is Shakspeare's, and not misapplied:—
War's a brain-spattering, windpipe-slitting art,
Unless her cause by right be sanctified.
If you have acted *once* a generous part,
The world, not the world's masters, will decide,
And I shall be delighted to learn who,
Save you and yours, have gain'd by Waterloo?

I am no flatterer—you've supp'd full of flattery:
They say you like it too—'tis no great wonder.
He whose whole life has been assault and battery,
At last may get a little tired of thunder;
And swallowing eulogy much more than satire, he
May like being praised for every lucky blunder,
Call'd "Saviour of the Nations"—not yet saved,
And "Europe's Liberator"—still enslaved.*

I've done. Now go and dine from off the plate
Presented by the prince of the Brazils,
And send the sentinel before your gate
A slice or two from your luxurious meals:†
He fought, but has not fed so well of late.
Some hunger, too, they say the people feels:—
There is no doubt that you deserve your ration,
But pray give back a little to the nation.

PYRRHONISM.

"To be, or not to be?"—Ere I decide,
I should be glad to know that which *is being.*
'Tis true we speculate both far and wide,
And deem, because we *see,* we are *all-seeing:*
For my part, I'll enlist on neither side,
Until I see both sides for once agreeing.
For me, I sometimes think that life is death,
Rather than life a mere affair of breath.

"Que scais-je?" was the motto of Montaigne,
As also of the first academicians:
That all is dubious which man may attain,
Was one of their most favorite positions.

* *Vide* Speeches in Parliament, after the battle of Waterloo.

† "I at this time got a post, being for fatigue, with four others. We were sent to break biscuit and make a mess for Lord Wellington's hounds. I was very hungry, and thought it a good job at the time, as we got our own fill while we broke the biscuit,—a thing I had not got for some days. When thus engaged, the Prodigal Son was never once out of my mind; and I sighed, as I fed the dogs, over my humble situation and my ruined hopes."—*Journal of a Soldier of the 71st Regiment during the War in Spain.*

There 's no such thing as certainty, that 's plain,
As any of Mortality's conditions;
So little do we know what we're about in
This world, I doubt if doubt itself be doubting.

It is a pleasant voyage perhaps to float,
Like Pyrrho, on a sea of speculation;
But what if carrying sail capsize the boat?
Your wise men don't know much of navigation;
And swimming long in the abyss of thought
Is apt to tire: a calm and shallow station
Well nigh the shore, where one stoops down and gathers
Some pretty shell, is best for moderate bathers.

ENGLAND.

I've no great cause to love that spot of earth,
Which holds what *might have been* the noblest nation;
But though I owe it little but my birth,
I feel a mix'd regret and veneration
For its decaying fame and former worth.
Seven years (the usual term of transportation)
Of absence lay one's old resentments level,
When a man's country 's going to the devil.

Alas! could she but fully, truly, know
How her great name is now throughout abhorr'd;
How eager all the earth is for the blow
Which shall lay bare her bosom to the sword;
How all the nations deem her their worst foe,
That worse than *worst of foes*, the once adored
False friend, who held out freedom to mankind,
And now would chain them, to the very mind;—

Would she be proud, or boast herself the free,
Who is but first of slaves? The nations are
In prison,—but the jailer, what is he?
No less a victim to the bolt and bar.
Is the poor privilege to turn the key
Upon the captive, freedom? He's as far
From the enjoyment of the earth and air
Who watches o'er the chain, as they who wear.

BERKLEY.

When Bishop Berkley said "there was no matter,"
And proved it—'twas no matter what he said:
They say his system 'tis in vain to batter,
Too subtile for the airiest human head;
And yet who can believe it? I would shatter
Gladly all matters down to stone or lead,
Or adamant, to find the world a spirit,
And wear my head, denying that I wear it.

What a sublime discovery 'twas to make the
Universe universal egotism,
That all 's ideal—*all ourselves!* I'll stake the
World (be 't what you will) that *that 's* no schism.
O Doubt!—if thou be'st Doubt, for which some take thee,
But which I doubt extremely—thou sole prism
Of the Truth's rays, spoil not my draught of spirit!
Heaven's brandy, though our brain can hardly bear it.

For ever and anon comes Indigestion,
(Not the most "Dainty Ariel,") and perplexes
Our soarings with another sort of question:
And that which after all my spirit vexes,
Is, that I find no spot where man can rest eye on,
Without confusion of the sorts and sexes,
Of beings, stars, and this unriddled wonder,
The world, which at the worst 's a glorious blunder.

POETICAL CHARACTERS.

Sir Walter reign'd before me; Moore and Campbell
Before and after; but now grown more holy,
The Muses upon Sion's hill must ramble
With poets almost Clergymen, or wholly;
And Pegasus has a psalmodic amble
Beneath the very Reverend Rowley Powley,
Who shoes the glorious animal with stilts,
A modern Ancient Pistol—by the hilts!

Still he excels that artificial hard
Laborer in the same vineyard, though the vine
Yields him but vinegar for his reward,—
That neutralized dull Dorus of the Nine;
That swarthy Sporus, neither man or bard:
That ox of verse, who *ploughs* for every line:—
Cambyses' roaring Romans beat at least
The howling Hebrews of Cybele's priest.

Then there 's my gentle Euphues; who, they say,
Sets up for being a sort of *moral me;*
He'll find it rather difficult some day
To turn out both, or either, it may be.
Some persons think that Coleridge hath the sway;
And Wordsworth has supporters, two or three;
And that deep-mouth'd Bœotian "Savage Landor"
Has taken for a swan rogue Southey's gander.

John Keats, who was kill'd off by one critique,
Just as he really promised something great,
If not intelligible, without Greek
Contrived to talk about the gods of late,
Much as they might have been supposed to speak.
Poor fellow! his was an untoward fate;
'Tis strange the mind, that very fiery particle,*
Should let itself be snuff'd out by an article.

* "Divinæ particulum auræ."

The list grows long of live and dead pretenders
To that which none will gain—or none will know
The conqueror at least; who, ere Time renders
His last award, will have the long grass grow
Above his burnt-out brain, and sapless cinders.
If I might augur, I should rate but low
Their chances;—they're too numerous, like the thirty
Mock tyrants, when Rome's annals wax'd but dirty.

A SOT.

Thrice happy he, who, after a survey
Of the good company, can win a corner,
A door that's *in* or boudoir *out* of the way,
Where he may fix himself, like small "Jack Horner,"
And let the Babel round run as it may,
And look on as a mourner, or a scorner,
Or an approver, or a mere spectator,
Yawning a little as the night grows later.

MONEY.

Why call the miser miserable? as
I said before: the frugal life is his,
Which in a saint or cynic ever was
The theme of praise: a hermit would not miss
Canonization for the selfsame cause,—
And wherefore blame gaunt wealth's austerities?
Because, you'll say, nought calls for such a trial;—
Then there's more merit in his self-denial.

He is your only poet;—passion, pure,
And sparkling on from heap to heap, displays
Possess'd, the ore, of which *mere hopes* allure
Nations athwart the deep: the golden rays
Flash up in ingots from the mine obscure:
On him the diamond pours its brilliant blaze;
While the mild emerald's beam shades down the dies
Of other stones, to soothe the miser's eyes.

The lands on either side are his: the ship
From Ceylon, Inde, or far Cathay, unloads
For him the fragrant produce of each trip;
Beneath his cars of Ceres groan the roads,
And the vine blushes like Aurora's lip;
His very cellars might be kings' abodes;
While he, despising every sensual call,
Commands—the intellectual lord of all.

Perhaps he hath great projects in his mind,
To build a college, or to found a race,
An hospital, a church,—and leave behind
Some dome surmounted by his meagre face.
Perhaps he would fain liberate mankind
Even with the very ore which makes them base;
Perhaps he would be wealthiest of his nation,
Or revel in the joys of calculation.

But whether all, or each, or none of these
May be the hoarder's principle of action,
The fool will call such mania a disease:—
What is his *own?* Go—look at each transaction,
Wars, revels, love—do these bring men more ease
Than the mere plodding through each "vulgar fraction"?
Or do they benefit mankind? Lean miser!
Let spendthrifts' heirs inquire of yours—who's wiser?

How beauteous are rouleaus! how charming chests
Containing ingots, bags of dollars, coins
(Not of old victors, all whose heads and crests
Weigh not the thin ore where their visage shines,
But) of fine unclipt gold, where dully rests
Some likeness, which the glittering cirque confines,
Of modern, reigning, sterling, stupid stamp:—
Yes! ready money *is* Aladdin's lamp.

"Love rules the camp, the court, the grove,—for love
Is heaven, and heaven is love:"—so sings the bard;
Which it were rather difficult to prove,
(A thing with poetry in general hard.)
Perhaps there may be something in "the grove,"
At least it rhymes to "love:" but I'm prepared
To doubt (no less than landlords of their rental)
If "courts" and "camps" be quite so sentimental.

THE FORTUNE.

How all the needy honorable misters,
Each out-at-elbow peer, or desperate dandy,
The watchful mothers, and the careful sisters,
(Who, by the by, when clever, are more handy
At making matches, where "'tis gold that glisters,"
Than their *he* relatives,) like flies o'er candy
Buzz round "*the* Fortune" with their busy battery,
To turn her head with waltzing and with flattery!

Each aunt, each cousin, hath her speculation;
Nay, married dames will now and then discover
Such pure disinterestedness of passion,
I've known them court an heiress for their lover.
"Tantæne!" Such the virtues of high station,
Even in the hopeful Isle, whose outlet 's "Dover!"
While the poor rich wretch, object of these cares,
Has cause to wish her sire had had male heirs.

Some are soon bagg'd, and some reject three dozen.
'Tis fine to see them scattering refusals
And wild dismay o'er every angry cousin,
(Friends of the party,) who begin accusals,
Such as—"Unless Miss (Blank) meant to have chosen
Poor Frederick, why did she accord perusals
To his billets? *Why* waltz with him? Why, I pray,
Look *yes* last night, and yet say *no* to-day?

"Why?—Why?—Besides, Fred really was *attach'd;*
'Twas not her fortune—he has enough without:
The time will come she 'll wish that she had snatch'd
So good an opportunity, no doubt:—
But the old Marchioness some plan had hatch'd,
As I'll tell Aurea at to-morrow's rout:
And after all poor Frederick may do better—
Pray, did you see her answer to his letter?"

Smart uniforms and sparkling coronets
Are spurn'd in turn, until her turn arrives,
After male loss of time, and hearts, and bets
Upon the sweepstakes for substantial wives;
And when at last the pretty creature gets
Some gentleman, who fights, or writes, or drives,
It soothes the awkward squad of the rejected,
To find how very badly she selected.

QUIXOTISM.

Rough Johnson, the great moralist, profess'd,
Right honestly, "he liked an honest hater!"—
The only truth that yet has been confess'd
Within these latest thousand years, or later.
Perhaps the fine old fellow spoke in jest:—
For my part I am but a mere spectator,
And gaze where'er the palace or the hovel is,
Much in the mode of Goethe's Mephistopheles;

But neither love nor hate in much excess;
Though 'twas not once so. If I sneer sometimes,
It is because I cannot well do less,
And now and then it also suits my rhymes.
I should be very willing to redress
Men's wrongs, and rather check than punish crimes,
Had not Cervantes, in that too true tale
Of Quixote, shown how all such efforts fail.

Of all tales 'tis the saddest—and more sad,
Because it makes us smile: his hero 's right,
And still pursues the right;—to curb the bad
His only object, and 'gainst odds to fight
His guerdon: 'tis his virtue makes him mad!
But his adventures form a sorry sight;—
A sorrier still is the great moral taught
By that real epic unto all who have thought.

Redressing injury, revenging wrong,
To aid the damsel and destroy the caitiff;
Opposing singly the united strong,
From foreign yoke to free the helpless native:—
Alas! must noblest views, like an old song,
Be for mere fancy's sport a theme creative,
A jest, a riddle, Fame through thick and thin sought!
And Socrates himself but Wisdom's Quixote?

Cervantes smiled Spain's chivalry away;
A single laugh demolish'd the right arm
Of his own country;—seldom since that day
Has Spain had heroes. While Romance could charm,
The world gave ground before her bright array;
And therefore have his volumes done such harm,
That all their glory, as a composition,
Was dearly purchased by his land's perdition.

NORMAN ABBEY.

To Norman Abbey whirl'd the noble pair,—
An old, old monastery once, and now
Still older mansion,—of a rich and rare
Mix'd Gothic, such as artists all allow
Few specimens yet left us can compare
Withal: it lies perhaps a little low,
Because the monks preferr'd a hill behind,
To shelter their devotion from the wind.

It stood embosom'd in a happy valley,
Crown'd by high woodlands, where the Druid oak
Stood like Caractacus in act to rally
His host, with broad arms 'gainst the thunder stroke;
And from beneath his boughs were seen to sally
The dappled foresters—as day awoke,
The branching stag swept down with all his herd,
To quaff a brook which murmur'd like a bird.

Before the mansion lay a lucid lake,
Broad as transparent, deep, and freshly fed
By a river, which its soften'd way did take
In currents through the calmer water spread
Around: the wildfowl nestled in the brake
And sedges, brooding in their liquid bed:
The woods sloped downwards to its brink, and stood
With their green faces fix'd upon the flood.

Its outlet dash'd into a deep cascade,
Sparkling with foam, until again subsiding,
Its shriller echoes—like an infant made
Quiet—sank into softer ripples, gliding
Into a rivulet; and thus allay'd,
Pursued its course, now gleaming, and now hiding
Its windings through the woods; now clear, now blue,
According as the skies their shadows threw.

A glorious remnant of the Gothic pile
(While yet the church was Rome's) stood half apart
In a grand arch, which once screen'd many an aisle.
These last had disappear'd—a loss to art:
The first yet frown'd superbly o'er the soil,
And kindled feelings in the roughest heart,
Which mourn'd the power of time's or tempest's march,
In gazing on that venerable arch.

Within a niche, nigh to its pinnacle,
Twelve saints had once stood sanctified in stone;
But these had fallen, not when the friars fell,
But in the war which struck Charles from his throne,
When each house was a fortalice—as tell
The annals of full many a line undone,—
The gallant cavaliers, who fought in vain
For those who knew not to resign or reign.

But in a higher niche, alone, but crown'd,
The Virgin Mother of the God-born Child,
With her Son in her blessed arms look'd round,
Spared by some chance when all beside was spoil'd;
She made the earth below seem holy ground.
This may be superstition, weak or wild,
But even the faintest relics of a shrine
Of any worship wake some thoughts divine.

A mighty window, hollow in the centre,
Shorn of its glass of thousand colorings,
Through which the deepen'd glories once could enter,
Streaming from off the sun like seraph's wings,
Now yawns all desolate: now loud, now fainter,
The gale sweeps through its fretwork, and oft sings
The owl his anthem, where the silenced quire
Lie with their hallelujahs quench'd like fire.

But in the noontide of the moon, and when
The wind is wing'd from one point of heaven,
There moans a strange unearthly sound, which then
Is musical—a dying accent driven
Through the huge arch, which soars and sinks again.
Some deem it but the distant echo given
Back to the night wind by the waterfall,
And harmonized by the old choral wall:

Others, that some original shape, or form
Shaped by decay perchance, hath given the power
(Though less than that of Memnon's statue, warm
In Egypt's rays, to harp at a fix'd hour)
To this gray ruin, with a voice to charm
Sad, but serene, it sweeps over tree or tower;
The cause I know not, nor can solve; but such
The fact: I've heard it,—once, perhaps, too much.

Amidst the court a Gothic fountain play'd,
Symmetrical, but deck'd with carvings quaint—
Strange faces, like to men in masquerade,
And here perhaps a monster, there a saint:
The spring gush'd through grim mouths of granite made,
And sparkled into basins, where it spent
Its little torrent in a thousand bubbles,
Like man's vain glory, and his vainer troubles.

The mansion's self was vast and venerable,
With more of the monastic than has been
Elsewhere preserved: the cloisters still were stable,
The cells, too, and refectory, I ween:

An exquisite small chapel had been able,
Still unimpair'd, to decorate the scene;
The rest had been reform'd, replaced, or sunk,
And spoke more of the baron than the monk.

Huge halls, long galleries, spacious chambers, join'd
By no quite lawful marriage of the arts,
Might shock a connoisseur; but when combined,
Form'd a whole which, irregular in parts,
Yet left a grand impression on the mind,
At least of those whose eyes are in their hearts;
We gaze upon a giant for his stature,
Nor judge at first if all be true to nature.

Steel barons, molten the next generation
To silken rows of gay and garter'd earls,
Glanced from the walls in goodly preservation:
And Lady Marys blooming into girls,
With fair long locks, had also kept their station:
And countesses mature in robes and pearls;
Also some beauties of Sir Peter Lely,
Whose drapery hints we may admire them freely.

Judges in very formidable ermine
Were there, with brows that did not much invite
The accused to think their lordships would determine
His cause by leaning much from might to right:
Bishops, who had not left a single sermon;
Attorneys-general, awful to the sight,
As hinting more (unless our judgments warp us)
Of the "Star Chamber" than of "Habeas Corpus."

Generals, some all in armor, of the old
And iron time, ere lead had ta'en the lead;
Others in wigs of Marlborough's martial fold,
Huger than twelve of our degenerate breed:
Lordlings, with staves of white or keys of gold:
Nimrods, whose canvas scarce contain'd the steed;
And here and there some stern high patriot stood,
Who could not get the place for which he sued.

But ever and anon, to soothe your vision,
Fatigued with these hereditary glories,
There rose a Carlo Dolce or a Titian,
Or wilder group of savage Salvatore's:*
Here danced Albano's boys, and here the sea shone
In Vernet's ocean lights; and there the stories
Of martyrs awed, as Spagnoletto tainted
His brush with all the blood of all the sainted.

Here sweetly spread a landscape of Lorraine;
There Rembrandt made his darkness equal light,
Or gloomy Caravaggio's gloomier stain
Bronzed o'er some lean and stoic anchorite:—

* Salvator Rosa.

But, lo! a Teniers wooes, and not in vain,
Your eyes to revel in a livelier sight:
His bell-mouth'd goblet makes me feel quite Danish*
Or Dutch with thirst—What, ho! a flask of Rhenish.

THE SUICIDE.

A sleep without dreams, after a rough day
Of toil, is what we covet most; and yet
How clay shrinks back from more quiescent clay!
The very Suicide that pays his debt
At once without instalments (an old way
Of paying debts, which creditors regret)
Lets out impatiently his rushing breath,
Less from disgust of life than dread of death.

'Tis round him, near him, here, there, everywhere,
And there 's a courage which grows out of fear,
Perhaps of all most desperate, which will dare
The worst to *know* it:—when the mountains rear
Their peaks beneath your human foot, and there
You look down o'er the precipice, and drear
The gulf of rock yawns,—you can't gaze a minute,
Without an awful wish to plunge within it.

'Tis true, you don't, but, pale and struck with terror,
Retire: but look into your past impression!
And you will find, though shuddering at the mirror
Of your own thoughts, in all their self-confession,
The lurking bias, be it truth or error,
To the *unknown;* a secret prepossession,
To plunge with all your fears—but where? You know not.
And that 's the reason why you do—or do not.

MOTIVES.

I hate a motive, like a lingering bottle
Which with the landlord makes too long a stand,
Leaving all claretless the unmoisten'd throttle,
Especially with politics on hand;
I hate it, as I hate a drove of cattle,
Who whirl the dust as simooms whirl the sand;
I hate it as I hate an argument,
A laureate's ode, or servile peer's "content."

'Tis sad to hack into the roots of things,
They are so much intertwisted with the earth;
So that the branch a goodly verdure flings,
I reck not if an acorn gave it birth.

* If I err not, "your Dane" is one of Iago's catalogue of nations "exquisite in their drinking."

To trace all actions to their secret springs
Would make indeed some melancholy mirth;
But this is not at present my concern,
And I refer you to wise Oxenstiern.*

TRUTH.

'Tis strange, but true; for truth is always strange;
Stranger than fiction: if it could be told,
How much would novels gain by the exchange!
How differently the world would men behold!
How oft would vice and virtue places change!
The new world would be nothing to the old,
If some Columbus of the moral seas
Would show mankind their souls' antipodes.

What "antres vast and deserts idle" then
Would be discover'd in the human soul!
What icebergs in the hearts of mighty men,
With self-love in the centre as their pole!
What Anthropophagi are nine of ten
Of those who hold the kingdoms in control!
Were things but only call'd by their right name,
Cæsar himself would be ashamed of fame.

VANITY.

The evaporation of a joyous day
Is like the last glass of champagne, without
The foam which made its virgin bumper gay;
Or like a system coupled with a doubt;
Or like a soda-bottle when its spray
Has sparkled and let half its spirit out;
Or like a billow left by storms behind,
Without the animation of the wind;

Or like an opiate, which brings troubled rest,
Or none; or like—like nothing that I know
Except itself;—such is the human breast;
A thing, of which similitudes can show
No real likeness,—like the old Tyrian vest
Dyed purple, none at present can tell how,
If from a shell-fish or from cochineal,†
So perish every tyrant's robe piecemeal!

But next to dressing for a rout or ball,
Undressing is a woe; our robe-de-chambre
May sit like that of Nessus, and recall
Thoughts quite as yellow, but less clear than amber.

* The famous Chancellor Oxenstiern said to his son, on the latter expressing his surprise upon the great effects arising from petty causes in the presumed mystery of politics: "You see by this, my son, with how little wisdom the kingdoms of the world are governed."

† The composition of the old Tyrian purple—whether from a shell-fish, or from cochineal, or from kermes, is still an article of dispute; and even its color—some say purple, others scarlet: I say nothing.

Titus exclaim'd, "I've lost a day!" Of all
The nights and days most people can remember,
(I have had of both, some not to be disdain'd,)
I wish they'd state how many they have gain'd.

ADELINE'S SONG.

THE BLACK FRIAR.

1.

Beware! beware! of the Black Friar,
Who sitteth by Norman stone,
For he mutters his prayer in the midnight air,
And his mass of the days that are gone.
When the Lord of the Hill, Amundeville,
Made Norman Church his prey,
And expell'd the friars, one friar still
Would not be driven away.

2.

Though he came in his might, with King Henry's right,
To turn church lands to lay,
With sword in hand, and torch to light
Their walls if they said nay;
A monk remain'd unchased, unchain'd,
And he did not seem form'd of clay,
For he 's seen in the porch, and he 's seen in the church,
Though he is not seen by day.

3.

And whether for good, or whether for ill,
It is not mine to say;
But still with the house of Amundeville
He abideth night and day.
By the marriage-bed of their lords, 'tis said,
He flits on the bridal eve;
And 'tis held as faith, to their bed of death
He comes—but not to grieve.

4.

When an heir is born, he 's heard to mourn,
And when aught is to befall
That ancient line, in the pale moonshine
He walks from hall to hall.
His form you may trace, but not his face,
'Tis shadow'd by his cowl:
But his eyes may be seen from the folds between,
And they seem of a parted soul.

5.

But beware! beware! of the Black Friar,
He still retains his sway,
For he is yet the Church's heir,
Whoever may be the lay.

Amundeville is lord by day,
But the monk is lord by night;
Nor wine nor wassail could raise a vassal
To question that friar's right.

6.

Say nought to him as he walks the hall,
And he'll say nought to you:
He sweeps along in his dusky pall,
As o'er the grass the dew.
Then grammercy! for the Black Friar;
Heaven sain him! fair or foul,
And whatsoe'er may be his prayer,
Let ours be for his soul.